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MUSKETEER FROM THE DUMAS (PÉRE) MONUMENT (PARIS)



Charles Morton :

“FATHER OF THE
HALLS.”

WRITTEN BY ISABEL
BROOKE ALDER.

ILLUSTRATED BY
PHOTOGRAPHS

MR. CHARLES MORTON

From Photo by LANGFIEL, LTD.



MATINÉE was in progress at the Palace, and the clear, appealing tones of Mrs. Beerbohm Tree were stirring the hearts of an immense audience to sympathy with the wants of the wife and family of the “Gentleman in Khaki” who is out on Active Service, when I sought the fulfilment of a promise of an interview with Mr. Charles Morton. He was, however, not to be found until the end of Kipling’s message had been delivered, and the graceful actress had been allowed, by a well-nigh insatiable public, to finally retire. Then the veteran manager emerged from depths impenetrable by the mere journalist, and whilst conveying me to his own particular sanctum, remarked that, thanks to Mrs. Tree’s generous

enterprise, the Fund for the Absent-Minded Beggar’s “little things” would benefit by a good round sum, since her weekly salary of £100 was being devoted to it in its entirety.

“That she should have chosen to occupy a short holiday from her ordinary work by making this departure in aid of a splendid cause at The Palace has added yet one more pleasant experience to my time here, and to my general store of reminiscences of Variety Theatres.”

“And what a huge store there must be!”

“Yes, they go back half a century, and that means, of course, to a date prior to the Music Hall as it is to-day, in fact prior to *anything* as it is nowadays! London when I was a boy

was indeed a different city, from all points of view; it has had time to change, though, since last August brought my eightieth birthday!"—Nobody would guess that the alert old man, with keen eyes, resonant voice and brisk movements, had reached such an advanced age, nor that his long life had been so unremittingly busy as is the case.

In telling of his boyhood's home he says, "We lived in Pimlico, amongst fields and market gardens, where cabbages and all kinds of green vegetables flourished exceedingly; the rhubarb, which persisted in claiming valuable spaces, despite the efforts of the 'weeders,' was considered the one blot on the landscape. Buckingham Palace was brought to its present form when I was seven; Nash was the architect, and Charles Mathews his apprentice. Chelsea, an inconsiderable village, was separated from London by a space given over to footpads and highwaymen, who 'earned an honest living' by their forcible arguments with the few brave spirits who ventured to walk home from the London theatres. The one way for the playgoers to circumvent their polite attentions was to wait at the bottom of St. James's Street until a party not less than thirty had collected, their augmented short sticks and lanterns giving some assurance of safety to the company. The streets were 'lighted' with oil lamps, and the few places of entertainment with candles; feeble old watchmen were the only peripatetic representatives of the law—excepting Townsend's Bow Street 'runners.' The theatres were few, and the restrictions put upon them by the Patent Theatre Monopoly, represented by Covent Garden and Drury Lane, were the reverse of encouraging; the penalty of infringing their rights, as some of the 'Minor Theatre' managers found by harsh experience, being six months' imprisonment with hard labour! Shakespeare was the exclusive property of the Patent Theatres. With the exception of the sundry theatres, there were but few places of amusement; 'tea gardens' did their little best to supply the want. There was a rural tavern called the 'Red

House,' close to the river, where is now Battersea Park; the pigeon shooting matches that went on there were only rivalled by those at Hornsey Wood House, now Finsbury Park; but at the 'Standard' at Pimlico, and the 'Winchester' in Southwark, was evolved the first idea of the music-hall; here, in their 'long room,' were held 'harmonic meetings' and 'free-and-easies' at which singers and comedians contributed to the evening's entertainment.

"My first venture in management was a tavern in the St. George's Road, near the Canal Bridge, at Pimlico, where 'harmonic meetings' were a great feature, the chairman of the evening calling upon any talented guests who happened to be present to contribute to the general hilarity in as far as their ability should permit. They were really good, too, these volunteers, but now and then a professional would be engaged, to give an extra brilliancy, as it were.

"When the audience outgrew the 'parlour,' I took the Canterbury Arms, Lambeth, and built a concert hall, and by degrees the place was enlarged, until it held such a solid footing that it literally stepped next door, and the Canterbury Music Hall was the result. Fifty years ago the foundation stone was laid."

Mr. Morton was sailing along so fast that although loth to interrupt his interesting narrative I felt bound to take him back to the *first* Canterbury, and verify a report that I had heard concerning Charles Dickens, and a picture gallery, in connection with it.

"Yes, it is true that Dickens used to come. He and Levy, the subsequent Editor of the *Telegraph*, were often to be seen together in the gallery which ran round the concert hall; Dickens always chose a seat from which, besides seeing the entertainers, he could watch the audience coming in. It was as if he could not endure to miss a chance of studying human nature, even for an hour! As to the pictures of which you have been told, they were in a gallery by themselves, and included specimens of the work of Macrise, Conture, Prieur, Gerard, some portraits by Sant, Rosa Bonheur's 'Horse Fair,' and many

more pictures equally celebrated. It was Dickens who gave the collection the name 'The Royal Academy over the Water.' A large supper room adjoined the picture gallery, where meals were served all the evening at a price so moderate that, considering the very excellent fare provided, one might fancy the caterer's profits must be small indeed; but they were not, though! No; those were good old days, when folks dined at six o'clock and came to supper at the Canterbury! Good music formed the backbone of the entertainment, glees and madrigals, sung by an excellent choir of men and boys, being the favourite items on the programme. When I opened the new Canterbury, one of my artists (professionals had by that time entirely taken the place of the volunteers of former years) was a certain Picco, a blind musician, who introduced a little instrument called after himself, now improved and known as the 'piccolo.' He was an immense draw, so I kept him for a year; George Hodgson, father of Miss Henrietta Hodgson (now Mrs. Labouchere), was also a favourite, with his Irish songs. Comic songs were really funny fifty years ago; nowadays it is generally only thanks to the comedian who sings them that they gain any smile-provoking qualities; in fact, take it all round, I must own that the standard of fare put before a Music Hall audience was higher then than now, more worthy of a 'Music' Hall, and less what is expected at the modern Theatre of Varieties."

"Is it a fact that to your influence may be traced the introduction of the prevailing 'turn' system, the dashing to half a dozen halls in one evening, which is perpetrated by some of the popular favourites of to-day?"

"Yes, I suppose I must plead guilty, for when I had built and opened, in 1862, a new hall in Oxford Street, I used to employ the same artists there and at the Canterbury, driving them backwards and forwards between the two, in six broughams. Santley, Mdlle. Parepa (afterwards the wife of the late Carl Rosa), Augustus Brahm, Miss Turpin, E. W. Mackney, and Sam Cowell were of the number. Sims Reeves, then at the height of his glory, declined a blank cheque to sing at the

opening of the Oxford Music Hall. The whirligig of time has brought the greatest tenor of the century on to my salary list, however, for he was singing at the Palace within the past year."

"How immense must be the total on the said list of the present day!"

"The figures are pretty big! It takes a solid thousand pounds a week, to give our seven performances—'shows' as we call them. Of course the sum, large as it is, is a mere nothing compared with what is paid away every week by the management of the Alhambra, and Empire, where the ballet and the whole method of working, requires so many more people than we do."

"Were you not once manager of the Alhambra?"

"Yes, when it was a theatre. 'Babil and Bijou' was produced when I was there, and the chorus 'Spring, gentle Spring,' (added to the original music by Jacobi, the conductor of the orchestra) nearly drove musical Londoners out of their senses, so 'popular' did it become. Not a butcher's boy, not a cabman, nor an 'unemployed' of any class but whistled it, more or less in tune, between every sentence. It was a foretaste of what we were to suffer from 'Nancy Lee' and 'Grandfather's Clock.' Some of the airs from 'Madame Angot' ran it close too. That delightful opera was produced during my short partnership with John Hollingshead at the Gaiety. By the way, you may like to be reminded that Matinées are due to his initiative. 'Madame Angot' did splendidly in London, as it had in Paris; but when I took it to America it fell flat as a flounder, and to the depressing tune of £8,000 moreover!"

"So for once you knew what it meant to lose money! Quite a new experience, surely!"

"Well, I suppose I am a sort of animated edition of the old saying, 'Nothing succeeds like success.'"

"Which is a very modest way of putting the still older, 'The labourer is worthy of his hire,' for the amount of work that you have put into your life would have been overwhelming to most folk."

"So the folks say, but I assure

you I have enjoyed it. They thought I was going to retire once—when I was seventy or thereabouts—but the Tivoli needed helping round a stiff corner, so the directors asked me to see to it. The tide turned, and now the Tivoli, 'goes on wheels.'"

"And you preside at the 'going' of the Palace."

"Since 1893. It gives one plenty to do! But that does not matter. To have my days full evidently suits me, and to have to work a good way into the night does not do any harm, if only one behaves like a rational being in the matter of not taking cold."

That Mr. Morton has always behaved *most* rationally is very evident in the clearness of his complexion, and the keenness of his grey eyes, which with his plentiful white hair make up an extremely satisfactory personality. He looks as fresh and brisk as any country Squire, and as unsuggestive of alcohol and tobacco as is possible to imagine.

Strange as it may seem, although almost all his eighty years have been passed in an atmosphere of smoke, Charles Morton has never fallen victim to the allurements of the fragrant weed; he dislikes even the smell of tobacco, so it is a drawback to his enjoyment of his professional career, that custom forbids the decoration of the interior walls of the Palace with variations of the remark, "Smoking strictly prohibited!" There is probably not another man in London who has so few enemies as Charles Morton, nor one whose friends so emphatically assert, "We shall not look upon his like again."

His quiet dignity, his power of seeing all sides of a question, his generous view of other folks' weak points, his scrupulous regard for truth, and his general uprightness, have long since earned for Charles Morton the appreciation of all who have, however casually, been brought into contact with "The Father of the Halls."



THE PALACE PROGRAMME

"ONLY"

By the BARONESS DE BERTOUCH.

It was only the ling'ring Echo
Of a Song that some child had sung
In the hush of a twilight chapel,
Where the waft of sweet incense hung.
I had heard far more wondrous music,
Yet I dreamt . . . or it seemed to me
That I learnt from this child's soft singing
What the Life of our lives should be.

It was only a few stray petals
From a Rose that had once been red!
Now 'twas pale, and half drown'd in dewdrops,
Like the tears that dear eyes might shed.
"Oh for grace to turn back to childhood!"
"Oh for time to unsay . . . unmake . . ."
And I learnt from those poor dead rose-leaves
How the Heart of our hearts may break.

It was only a dim old Picture—
The fair child of a master-mind
Which had died in its grand conception,
For that Painter was stricken blind.
It was blurr'd with poor sightless touches,
Just a tumult of Sea and Sky,
Yet I learnt from this Great Unfinished
That the Soul of our souls *can* die!



MR. T. SHAW SAFE

Snapshots in Klondike

AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. T. SHAW SAFE

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM LE QUEUX. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS



DNE of the most adventurous of Englishmen, Mr. T. Shaw Safe, a pioneer of Klondike, arrived in Europe a few days since from a third visit to Alaska, and I was afforded an opportunity of half an hour's intensely interesting chat with him. His first visit to the Yukon was in 1897, when, attracted by vague reports of auriferous discoveries, he set out from London as special correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*. Alone he crossed the dreaded White Pass in December, being the first time such afeat had been accomplished in winter. He was, however, stopped by the ice not being formed on the river, and compelled to retrace his journey and

travel by another route. The story of the hardships he then encountered would fill a volume, but he returned safely to England. This was when Dawson City was but a few huts, and at a time when the country was practically unexplored. He made a second tour in the following year, but the third journey, from which he has just returned, was the longest and most perilous of all, embracing many extremely hazardous feats of exploring in the hitherto unknown wilds of Alaska. His story is as full of excitement as a sensational romance, and that life in Klondike is not an easy one is shown by a chance remark of his, that "they are dying off like flies."

In the course of our conversation, I

asked him to relate for the benefit of readers of THE LUDGATE MAGAZINE a few of his adventures during this last journey.

"Well," he responded, with a merry laugh—for he, as his friends of London clubs well know, is a thoroughly good fellow—"I had one or two rather narrow shaves. All the way down the Yukon we were apparently prospecting for rocks, and eventually one transfixed the bottom of the steamer, and we just

very frequent, and the North-West Mounted Police, under Colonel Steele, is most efficient in preventing crime. They are without doubt one of the finest bodies of men in the world, and although when I left Dawson, war had not been actually declared by the Transvaal, I was asked by nearly 200 men—many of them old English soldiers—whether it would be possible to volunteer. All of them are hardy frontiersmen who can kill with a revolver at 100 yards, while



STEAMER SINKING IN THE YUKON

managed to escape from drowning. Life is pretty rough. Besides this, the greatest criminals of Europe are just now wandering about the trails. Of course, murder is a frequent occurrence, but mostly through jealousy. As an instance, at the Monte Carlo Theatre, in Dawson, within one week, three women were murdered and one committed suicide! Each case of murder was followed by suicide. It must, however, be added that robbery is not

I have seen many draw pictures on a tree at double that distance with a repeating rifle. They might have been useful as scouts. Unfortunately, I reached Washington prior to December, when neither the British nor Canadian Governments were looking for volunteers. They have a novel way of arresting a man by throwing a small steel chain around the wrist and twisting the ends, which brings the prisoner to reason very



FRONT STREET, DAWSON CITY

quickly. At present there is great dissatisfaction among them, because owing to the Prohibition Law they are allowed no canteen, and beer can only be obtained in the town at 2s. a glass. Their pay, it may be added, is only six shillings a day, and they are allowed to have no interest in the mines. The punishment of the 'wood-pile' is most dreaded, prisoners being paraded at five a.m. each day, both in summer and winter, and in their presence the guards are served with ball ammunition, and orders read that they are to 'shoot' on any attempt to escape. Then they are set at hard labour."

"I suppose you had a pretty tough time up there?"

"The trails were rather worse beyond Dawson than Dyak trails in Borneo, in spite of the millions in gold that have been brought out over them. I was absolutely alone for weeks together, and many a time have been almost

overwhelmed by the utter dreariness of the endless swamps. In winter it is different, for the place is ice-bound, and you can sleigh everywhere with dog-teams. But prospecting in summer, after the first hour's walking, one is constantly wet through from falls into pools of water or rivers, and wading through swamps, while the ubiquitous mosquito makes himself felt, and even drives animals to suicide."

"And is the getting up to Dawson as difficult as is generally supposed?" I asked.

"Not exactly. Still, very uncomfortable. It is after one gets to Dawson that the difficulties commence. It costs more to take provisions fifteen miles beyond Dawson, on account of the bad trails, than to take them out from England to Dawson. The latter place is so crowded nowadays that one can scarcely walk along the streets, but there is far less enterprise shown by our own colonists than by Amer-

ricans. All the principal buildings belong to the latter. I would not recommend anyone to go out there, believing that he may make his fortune with a small capital. Oxford men and others are serving in bars, while thousands at the creeks are dying of typhoid and spinal meningitis. Besides, the Mining Laws of the North-West Territory are iniquitous. Suppose one wants a claim, you can only stake out 250 feet; you pay ten dollars a year for

claims! Therefore the great rush to the American side is not to be wondered at, for there the prospector can stake out 1,320 feet, there is no miner's licence to pay, it costs but 100 dollars a year to represent the claim, he is given a free Government grant, and has to pay no royalty whatever. In Klondike many things strike the stranger as curious. The women are often beautifully dressed, and I have seen one wearing a belt made of nuggets of gold



A DOG TRAM, DAWSON CITY

your licence, fifteen dollars to record your claim, or renew it, and must do 500 dollars worth of work on it. For all this you have no title to the land, the Government can refuse to renew your licence, and can also obtain forfeiture, for various reasons, even if a miner or a cook has forgotten to take out his licence. To crown all, however, a ten per cent. royalty on the gross profit is demanded, thus absolutely preventing the working of any but the very richest

valued at £1,000. As soon as one enters Dawson, a prominent feature in the landscape is a ship drawn up at the wharf, fitted as a meat dépôt. The meat is Australian, and frozen, costing the buyer one halfpenny a pound, and is retailed at 4s. a pound! Another curiosity is a pretty little French café on the left bank of the Yukon, opposite Dawson, called the 'Café de Leon.' It is the great resort on Sundays. No, living is not cheap

in Dawson; indeed, I have paid £1 a night for a bed in a bath-house. The Fairview Hotel, however, is comfortable, and there the dinner can cost anything from 2 dollars to 1,000 dollars. One miner of my acquaintance, when he comes into town from the creeks, likes his dinner to cost 1,000 dollars, and if any change is left he usually throws it out of window to be scrambled for by the bystanders. He throws out 20-dollar gold pieces and watches the fun! At the Fairview there are flowers on the table, and every kind of vegetable you care to pay for—all grown in Dawson. There is no reason why the country should not be self-supporting so far as vegetables are concerned, on account of there being no night in summer. Wheat-growing has this year been tried, and found very successful, by Messrs. Achleen and Morley. Champagne is £6 a bottle, beer is £1. 10s. a bottle, and the minimum currency in use is a coin of the value of 2s.

"While I was in Dawson, an aeronaut named Leonard made an ascent by balloon holding on to a trapeze, intending to descend by parachute. He, however, did not calculate the coldness of the air above, and went up gaily shouting 'I'm off to St. Michael's.' Next instant, however, the balloon collapsed and he fell from a great height upon the roof of a house. I snapshotted him as he fell."

"And how about mining prospects?" I inquired.

"I think the present claims being worked will last from four to eight years, and then poorer workings will be worked by hydraulic power. The gold zone extends, I think, northward and right across to Siberia, and that the mother lode will eventually be found much further north than the Klondike region. The only other theory must be that the whole Klondike was, thousands of years ago, a great solid mass of quartz, and

that the gold was ground out by glacial action. The ore is found in most unexpected places. Lately, in American territory on the Forty Mile River, which had been prospected since 1886 without result, solid nuggets and enormously rich pay streaks of gold have been now discovered. At Cape None, which lies 60 miles north of St. Michael's, men were this year washing out gold on the sea-shore. Nearly 4,000 men are at work there now, and the whole beach is staked out for 15 miles. One ship, arriving in San Francisco on October 30th, brought two million dollars' worth of gold from this place."

"I believe Mr. Harry de Windt, the explorer, was also one of the early arrivals in the Klondike, was he not?"

"Yes. He passed through it on his attempted journey from New York to Paris by land, passing across the ice on Behring Straits. Unfortunately, he was stopped by the breaking up of the ice, and nearly lost his life on the Siberian side. He will attempt the same journey again this autumn, and I shall accompany him. We shall pass to the north of Klondike this time, going down the Mackenzie and Porcupine Rivers, reaching the Yukon, and eventually cross from Cape Prince of Wales to East Cape, in Siberia, continuing our journey by Verkoyansk and Yakoutsk as far as Irkoutsk, thence to Europe by the new Trans-Siberian Railway. We expect the journey to occupy nearly a year, and shall pass through an Arctic region never before traversed. Mr. de Windt has arranged to be back in his villa at San Remo for the following winter."

"I hope both your lives are insured," I observed smiling.

"Well, insurance companies don't care to take the risk," laughed Mr. Safe, and with a hearty grip of the hand he wished me good-bye.

THE WELL

of OODMI SING

WRITTEN BY HERBERT COMPTON.

ILLUSTRATED BY GILBERT WALENN

IT was a suffocating hot-weather evening in May as Jack Glover stood in the verandah of his bungalow on the crest of *Káladevi Pahár*, looking moodily down on his young plantation lying on the hill-slope below. His hands were plunged despondently in his pockets, and his face wore a look of gloom.

He was worrying over his tea-seedlings, of which he had planted out many thousands during the last year. There had been a six months' drought, and it had killed more than half his estate. The remaining plants were dying by hundreds daily, and there was still a month of the hot weather left before the Monsoon was due. Jack was speculating whether a single plant would survive to benefit by the rainy season when it burst.

His meditations were interrupted by the sound of approaching footsteps, and a singularly old man, with snowy beard and wrinkled face, hobbled slowly up to the bungalow and halted in front of him. It was Ghaiba, the *chowkeydar*, come to make his evening *salaam*.

"*Husoor!*" (Your Honour.) The

words were quavered out in a salutation meant to be both respectful and comprehensive.

"Ah, Ghaiba, is that you? What is the news?" Jack asked the stereotyped question mechanically. It was phrased to keep up a little fiction that the ancient had stern duties to perform and important reports to render.

"The news of to-day," answered Ghaiba oracularly, "is as the news of yesterday."

"And will be the news of to-morrow," added Jack bitterly. "I know it by heart, Ghaiba. The sky is cloudless. The sun blazes down. There is no sign of rain. God sleeps. And the tea bushes die, and die, and die."

"True," answered Ghaiba phlegmatically. "I warned my lord when he began to cultivate the hill of *Kála Devi* of the curse that lies upon it."

"And I told you, Ghaiba, then, and tell you again now, that you are a superstitious old man of the mountain, and at your really venerable age should be superior to black demons and rubbish of that sort."

"My age," remonstrated the old watchman with dignity, "is, as my lord knows, one hundred and twenty years."

"So you've told me one hundred and twenty times, and more," interjected Jack.

"Who, then, should know *Káladevi Páhár* better than Ghaiba? Ghaiba who was born on it, and has lived on it while four dominions ruled in Hind. And yet," he went on inconsequently, dropping his voice to an uneasy whisper, "that thing still perplexes and troubles me."

"What thing? The well?"

"Even so. The Well of Oodmi Sing. Its waters continue to subside. It is a week since I first reported it to your honour. Since then each day the level of the water has fallen by a palm's breadth. And now I perceive at the foot of the rampart a space newly green, where the grass sprouts. The thirsty earth is stealing the water from my well."

"What wonder with such a drought as this, and the whole hillside splitting and gaping open? Is not the very river down in the valley dry?"

"The river has dried before many times. It is the sign of a famine year. But never yet the Well of Oodmi Sing. *Jenáb* (my lord), I fear this is a manifestation of the wrath of *Kála Devi*. And if the well dries up—"

"—Yes?"

"I shall die," answered Ghaiba, with simple conviction. "It is the water of the well that sustains my life."

"There, there, old fellow—don't talk of dying," replied Jack kindly, laying his hand on Ghaiba's shoulder, "you are long past such a human weakness as that! Remember there are other wells to supply your wants."

"The *Huzoor* speaks truly. There are other wells. But none like the Well of Oodmi Sing. Its virtue is known to my lord. How it can turn all objects, aye, even fragile flowers, into stone. It is that virtue in the water that has prolonged Ghaiba's years far beyond the appointed number. If now this water dries up, who shall preserve a single flower beyond its little hour? And Ghaiba—?"

He stood nodding his head mournfully and inquiringly at Jack, his senile features clouded with a sadly troubled expression. "When Ghaiba is gone,

who will guard my lord's Fort and the Well of Oodmi Sing?"

"Look here, old chap," said Jack, clapping him gently on the back, "you are worrying yourself unnecessarily. All things will right themselves as soon as God awakes and the rain comes. And I've no doubt you'll go on guarding the Well of Oodmi Sing for another hundred years. What you want is a little encouragement in your somewhat protracted duty." He passed into the dining room, and returned in a moment with a bottle in his hand. "Here is something which will enable you to see life in a more cheerful light."

A dull sparkle of delight came into Ghaiba's eyes, as he hastily clutched the bottle and hid it in the capacious folds of his *choga*. "Ah, generous and compassionate cherisher of the needy," he exclaimed, his voice rising to a senile tremulo, "may wealth and honour descend on my lord, and sons upon sons be born unto him! Ghaiba is his slave, and will trouble him no more. Ghaiba returns to his post in the Fort. *Salaam, Jenáb, salaam*," and muttering many benedictions the ancient shuffled back to his hut by the Well of Oodmi Sing.

The Fort Ghaiba alluded to stood perched on the crest of the hill which formed Jack's tea estate, and not more than fifty yards distant from the miniature plateau on which he had built his bungalow. It was known as *Miankot*, or the Castle of the Noble, and had once been a Rajpoot chieftain's stronghold. But all that remained now was a skeleton look-out tower, a crumbling bastion, and an undermined rampart rising from a ruined mound of moss-grown stones. In what had been the courtyard of the Fort, and close to the rampart, stood a large tank, known in the native tongue as the Well of Oodmi Sing. It was a deep, dark, cavernous recess, arched over with masonry, and the waters within looked black, like the liquid in a vat. A curious circumstance connected with this well was its power of petrifying, and Jack had a collection of specimen flowers and other perishable objects, which had remained steeped in its waters until they turned into a brittle stony substance.

Jack was mightily fond and proud of

his old Fort, which—itsself picturesque beyond description—commanded matchless views of the Himalaya Mountains behind, and an undulating valley stretching away for miles and miles in front. Legend and tradition clustered thickly round the crumbling old walls that stood on the hill of *Kâla Devi*, or the Black Demon, and were piously preserved by Ghaiba, the self-constituted warden of the Fort in general, and the well in particular.

Ghaiba was a personality quite in keeping with the fort. In his shaggy woollen *choga*, with a goat's-hair girdle round his waist, and on his head the peculiar covering worn by Himalayan peasants, decorated with little tufts and pellets of coloured wool, he formed an appropriate and pleasing figure in the landscape. Moreover he was the essence of antiquity himself : almost as much a ruin as the fort.

If he was a little touched it was on the subject of the Well of Oodmi Sing, which he reverenced with a pagan awe. Night and morning he made sacrifices at its mouth, as he might at a shrine, strewing the precincts with rice and yellow flowers. He would allow no one to draw water from it except himself, who never did so without suspiciously peering into the brass vessel, and muttering incantations before he distributed its contents. He disliked people approaching his well, and if by chance he caught any one trying to peep into its black depths would violently push them aside with a threat that *Kâla Devi* would topple them in and turn them to stone if they dared to do so again.

Ghaiba came into Jack's keeping with the property. The old *chowkeydar* had lived in the Fort all his lifetime, and was as much a part and parcel of it as its foundation stones. At first he resented the intrusion of the light-hearted young Englishman into his ancient domain, and indeed used such strong expletives in illustration of his disapproval that Jack's Mohammedan servants requested their master's permission to eject the old Hindu *Badmash*. But so far from granting it, Jack took a fancy to the eccentric old fellow because of his independent spirit, and unadulterated anger, and half out of admiration, half out of

pity, confirmed him in his post of warden of the well, and wrote him down in the plantation muster-roll for a small monthly allowance. From that hour Ghaiba regarded Jack as his lawful liege lord, dubbed him *Mian Sahib*, and treated him with the same respect he had shown the proud old Rajpoot chieftains whom he served in his youth.

It was from Ghaiba that Jack heard the story of Mian Oodmi Sing, a semi-independent Rajpoot baron, and head of the Sonkla clan, who ruled over Miankôt for many years. He had been a doughty warrior in his day, and in Ghaiba's opinion clearly very little removed from a demi-god. But his most celebrated exploits, reduced to plain language, could hardly be distinguished from common filibustering. He was enormously rich, having accumulated great wealth of loot during a long and successful career, in which he impartially sacked every palace, town and bazaar within a hundred miles of Miankôt.

His end was violent. When the great Ghoorka invasion rolled over the submontane Himalayan States, Oodmi Sing was besieged in his Fort by the Nepaul army, and reduced to the last straits by starvation. In this extremity he died as befitted his nobility, sallying forth at the head of his followers, and slaying a thousand of the foe before they were themselves exterminated. There was a horrible story sometimes whispered about a previous massacre of his women-folk, but Ghaiba, although he professed to have been present throughout the defence of Miankôt, would never speak of this. He loved rather to dwell on those brighter days of its earlier history, when it was the abiding-place of mail-clad warriors renowned in camp and field, and the scene of triumphant homecomings and barbaric festivities.

* * * *

For a full hour after Ghaiba left him, Jack Glover stalked his verandah, smoking his pipe and glouting over his troubles. He foresaw ruin impending, and there was no road for escape. From time to time he stopped, and cast his eyes towards the distant valley, where the smoke from hamlet and homestead was hanging heavily in the thick air,

and wondered sorrowfully how those poor devils of peasants managed to get through a famine year, gathering a sort of consolation from the consciousness of a common calamity. At last the sun set in a curtain of yellow dust, with which the air was laden, and Jack gave a sigh of relief. It was another day done. The short twilight came and went; and the indistinct stars began to glimmer dully. Then dinner was served, and he tried to force himself to eat; but it was too hot, too depressing in the house, and he returned to the verandah and resumed his restless stalk again.

Presently he found himself, hardly knowing how or why, strolling in the direction of the Fort, and turned off the road and up the path that led to it. A few steps carried him over the mouldering walls into the courtyard. Here the sound of a voice fell upon his ear. It was Ghaiba, the *chowkeydar*, chattering and gesticulating to himself as he crouched by the mouth of the Well of Oodmi Sing.

"Good," mused Jack, "the old chap has forgotten his troubles and is happy now. There is a marvellous virtue in a dram of coolie rum, and he has reaped the benefit of it. Well, Ghaiba," he said aloud, as he strolled towards him, "how goes your watch to-night?"

The old man started and turned a scared face towards Jack. It was some moments before he recognised his master. Then he slowly struggled to his feet, and coming close to him, lifted up his hands as one who commands silence. "Hark!" he whispered, "does not my lord hear them?"

"Hear what?"

"The Voices of the Well," and Ghaiba waved a trembling hand towards the cavernous recess.

Jack affected to listen. "There are no voices," he said pityingly. "It is the rustling of the peepul tree you hear. You are dreaming, Ghaiba."

The old man shook his head impatiently. "My lord may not hear the voices," he said, "but Ghaiba does. Even as he heard them on that dark day when Mian Oodmi Sing preserved the honour of his *zenana*—the day of the Great Sacrifice."

"What sacrifice do you speak of?" asked Jack. "Where did it happen?"

"It happened here," cried Ghaiba, striking the ground between them with his staff. "These stones ran red with blood."

"What happened here?"

For some moments the old man stood motionless, his eyes fixed on the ground, his attitude of one lost in deep thought. Then he heaved a deep sigh, and rousing himself, turned to Jack.

"Listen, then, *Jendab*," he said, "and thou shalt hear the story of the Well of Oodmi Sing.

"It was in the Black Year, when the Ghoorkas overran the land. None could resist them, for they came in numbers like the flying ants, when they swarm from the ground before the bursting of a thunderstorm. Kingdoms fell before them, and armies were swallowed up.

"They besieged Miankot. For six desperate months Oodmi Sing held out. There was not so much grain left in the Fort as would fill the hollow of your honour's hand. The very stones of the walls were bare of their weeds and grass, that had been gathered to serve as food. That peepul tree was leafless.

"The Ghoorka dogs were encamped everywhere around and below. Thrice had they been driven back from the assault, and thereafter the cowards dared not storm the walls again. But from afar they mocked us, and laughed in our beards, and scattered grain before our starving eyes for the birds of the air to feast upon.

"'Tis well," cried Oodmi Sing, and flung his favourite falcon. The blue *dhons* rose and fled in a cloud. But *Biiji* brought back one in her talons. 'Patrons of pigeons, and pigeon-hearted yourselves,' shouted Oodmi Sing from the battlement, 'beware of the falcons of the Fort.'

"Then the Ghoorka general had resort to treachery, and tying letters to the shafts of arrows shot them over the walls. In them were written promises of great rewards of money if the garrison would deliver up the Fort.

"Thereupon Oodmi Sing filled a great basket with gold mohurs, and bade a man carry it, and his warriors follow. And parading round the ramparts cast the

coin over in handfuls, so that the Ghoorka soldiery broke their ranks and fell to scrambling and fighting for it—aye, even to the officers in authority.

"Beggars and base-born," laughed Oodmi Sing, tugging at his beard, "glut you with the gold you value more than honour." Then to his warriors, "Scatter! Scatter!" And at these words they each seized a great handful of gold, and hurled it at the rabble below. And the riot raged afresh. Seeing this, and his army all in disorder, shame fell upon the Ghoorka general, and he felt his face was blackened, and hid himself in his tent.

Last of all he wrote a ribald missive, and sent it under a flag of truce, demanding the surrender of the Fort ere set of sun, under threat of shameful death by torture to the men, and for the women-folk nameless infamy.

They brought and laid the missive at Oodmi Sing's feet, and Poorun, the scribe, read it.

"Dark grew the face of the chief. 'Brothers, your answer?' he demanded, as he looked proudly round upon his clan.

"In the turn of a swallow's wing a hundred swords flashed in the air. 'This is our answer,' they cried, 'only give us leave to deliver it while yet we have strength.'

"Then Oodmi Sing knew they meant the Great Sacrifice—that fearful Rajpoot rite which dooms to death the women and children, and to self-immolation the men.

"So be it," said the chief, and passed into the *zenana*, to make known to the women-folk the decision of the clan.

"He entered with stern set face and resolute step. When he returned his chin hung on his chest, and he swayed in his walk like a drunken man.

"He led his warriors to the Great Hall, where the feasts were held. And, at his summons, one came bearing in his hand the bowl of opium that was



"IT WAS THERE I CROUCHED"

to nerve them for the deed they had to do. In silence they drank it, and the subtle fire mounted into their brains, and their eyes grew strange and wild. Then they robed themselves in yellow garments, the fatal colour of accepted doom, and bared their heads and waited."

Ghaiba paused, and passed his hand thrice across his face with a shudder.

"It was there I crouched," he went on, with a stern effort, pointing to an embrasure in the rampart, visible now by the light of the moon just topping the mountains. "I was but a child, forgotten and unheeded. And as I hid and peeped, I saw the door of the *zenana* open, and forth there issued the women and children of the clan. At their head, calm and stately, walked the wife of Oodmi Sing. Slowly they circled round the courtyard, singing the song of sacrifice."

With the action of a man reverently making way, Ghaiba retreated a few steps, waving his staff feebly to indicate the spot.

"Here they gathered in a group," again he struck the ground, "and stood, unveiled, so that all men might see their faces. Jenâb! Jenâb! it was a sight to soften the heart of Siva the Destroyer. Calm and beautiful, and innocent and helpless, they stood. Arrayed in silken garments, gay with brightest colours; their arms and bosoms glittering with gems and gold; their faces turned to the sun. It was as if a cluster of lovely flowers had suddenly blossomed out of these stones.

"The song of sacrifice ceased for a moment, and a woman's voice rang out clear and unshaken:

"The wife of Oodmi Sing awaits her lord."

Once more Ghaiba stopped. He was trembling violently. He fell back a few paces, and leaned against the masonry of the well.

"And then?" whispered Jack, to rouse him.

"There came the clank of steel, and the rush of many feet. A yellow multitude surged out. Madness was in their eyes. They were tigers, not men.

"As the icy snow wind, rushing down from the mountains, sweeps over the

meadows and lays them low, so swooped Oodmi Sing and his Sonklas upon that cluster of flowers. His was the arm to strike the signal blow. But it was with averted face. *Kâla Devi* guided his sword against the bosom of his wife, bared to receive it. And the blood spurted out and drenched Oodmi Sing.

"At the sight of it there broke out hoarse inhuman howls and frenzied cries, and a hurricane of descending blows, followed by the hideous thud of stricken flesh. It was blood—blood—blood everywhere. Blood and butchery. But from the women never a shriek. Only the song of sacrifice, fading away, until it was stifled in sobs and gasps.

"Hai! Hai! The deed was done. There was no resistance," and Oodmi Sing leaned heavily against the well—"aye, even here where I am leaning now," and pointed at it with his finger.

"Dripping with the blood of their slaughtered wives and children, his warriors gathered up the corpses and cast them in."

Slowly Ghaiba rose, and passing round to the mouth of the well, pointed into its cavernous depths.

"There they lie," he moaned, "there they lie," and rocked his body to and fro.

Then with a look of awful apprehension he clutched Jack by the arm, and peering anxiously into his face, whispered:

"And now the well is drying up. My lord knows the virtue of its waters?"

"The virtue of its waters?" echoed Jack, in a startled voice.

"Aye. The virtue of its waters. My lord has seen how tender flowers and leaves, that a babe might crush in its fingers, harden into stone in the Well of Oodmi Sing. The flowers of the Sonkla clan lie beneath these waters. Can my lord not reason?"

"Impossible," cried Jack incredulously, "impossible."

"To *Kâla Devi* all things are possible," said Ghaiba impressively, as he shook his head and raised his hands aloft.

Then he suddenly and utterly broke down, as if the strain of excitement were too great to endure longer. His hands dropped to his side in a helpless despair, and he sank feebly upon the ground,

moaning : "There is trouble here ; there is trouble here !" And so resumed the crouching position in which Jack had first found him.

Jack waited patiently a few minutes, and tried to arouse him. But the old man turned on him with vacant eyes and answered nothing. He only moaned, and rocked himself, and looked into the well.

Nothing would induce him to speak again. And, in the end, Jack was obliged to leave him, still moaning—still looking into the well.

"Poor old chap!" he muttered to himself as he returned to his bungalow, "he is madder than ever to-night." And, flinging himself into a capacious cane arm-chair in the verandah, he set to work recalling all that Ghaiba had told him, and wondering how the loquacious old man had kept this story to himself so long. And in doing so it came to pass that presently he fell asleep.

* * * *

When he awoke it was long past midnight, for the waning moon had mounted high. He had been aroused so instantly and thoroughly, that he made sure one of his servants had done it, until a glance to left and right showed him he was alone. And yet he could have sworn some one shook him. He arose and looked through the house, only to find it empty. Trivial and perfectly natural as the discovery was, it created in his mind a sensation of uneasiness he could not account for. He felt absolutely certain he had been awakened by some one shaking him.

Perplexed and restless, he strolled out into the open space in front, and began pacing up and down. A deathlike stillness filled the sweltering air, and even the insects of the night were dumb. The earthy smell of dust reeked in the atmosphere, sour as a London fog. The stones and rocks scattered about exhaled the heat they had absorbed during the day. Under his tread the grass cracked and snapped crisply. A sense of unrest and apprehension, which he could not explain, began to oppress Jack painfully.

"Hullo ! What's that ?" he suddenly ejaculated, as he found himself involuntarily lurching forward. "Who

pushed me ? Hang it—there I go again ! There's something queer about this. I shall be hearing the Voices of the Well next, and seeing the ghosts of old Oodmi Sing's women-folk."

Instinctively he glanced towards the Fort, with a look of half-superstitious expectation on his face. Even as he did so, there came from the earth beneath him a low rumbling sound, and the ground began to tremble and oscillate violently. The next instant his eyes were riveted in a paralysis of astonishment on the look-out tower. It was swaying to and fro like the masts of a ship at anchor. Then, with a sudden lurch, it toppled and fell. Simultaneously there came a crash behind him, and he leaped round just in time to see his bungalow collapsing like a house of cards.

"My God ! what an earthquake !" he gasped, spellbound in helpless horror. His teeth chattered, his brow was drenched with cold perspiration, a vertigo of giddiness seized him, and he felt he had lost all power of voluntary movement. For a full minute he stood, swaying to and fro on the oscillating ground, until the wave gradually passed by.

When his self-control returned, he cautiously approached the wreck of his bungalow, and stood gazing at it in a witless way. Then he shouted for his servants, but none answered him. Rushing to the back, where their huts stood, he found all levelled to the ground. Again he called, but without avail. In a panic of desperation he began to quarry away at the ruins, only to convince himself that instantaneous death had overwhelmed them.

The despair of loneliness shook him. Was he the only person left alive on *Kdalevi* ? He remembered Ghaiba, and dashed towards the Fort. As he neared it, he caught the faint sound of trickling water. Picking his way over the newly-littered ground, he mounted the foundations of the wall, and stood peering into the gloom. In front of him, where formerly the courtyard stretched, a huge black chasm gaped. The whole of the rampart had fallen away, carrying with it the bastion and Ghaiba's hut, and half of the Well of

Oodmi Sing, from which the water was still draining away through the débris. "Ghaiba!" he called out hoarsely, "Ghaiba, are you alive?"

In the silence that followed, he recognised the silence of the tomb. Ghaiba, the *chowkeydar*, was dead and buried beneath the ruins of the well he had guarded so long and faithfully.

* * * *

Morning came at last, and revealed the extent and cause of the catastrophe. The water oozing from the bottom of the well had saturated the foundations of the undermined rampart, and in the convulsion of the earthquake the moist, heavy mass had started away from the dry surroundings and toppled over, carrying with it more than half the well.

A portion of the courtyard still remained, and making his way to its edge, Jack looked at the chaos of earth and stone below, seeking for some sign of Ghaiba's fate.

Presently, as his keen gaze scrutinised the surface, he became aware of a certain repetition of shape in the grey-coloured stones. The peculiarity caught and arrested his attention with a curious insistence. Then it began to suggest. He stared and stared, and rubbed his eyes, and stared again. Was it fancy—this which he saw, or thought he saw?

But the grey shapes remained, distinct and ever suggestive—shapes that bore a weird resemblance to human bodies.

As he looked there flashed across Jack's memory Ghaiba's last words, and the gruesome suggestion which Jack had dismissed as the delusion of a crazy brain. But it was no delusion, for he realised now these fantastic shapes below were petrified human bodies. They lay in huddled confusion, just as they had been swept down by the first rush of escaping water. Ghastly relics, imperishably fixed in the rigid attitudes of violent death.

A morbid curiosity prompted him to examine them more closely. Lowering himself on to the débris, he crept towards the spot where the remains lay thickest. In his passage the pressure of his tread moved an object on which he had stepped, and a lean stiff arm was

levered up, and struck his knee. He sprang back with a shudder, as though he had trodden on a snake.

The stony arm fell back, and in doing so something adhering to it glistened—something that was yellow, and shone like gold.

It caught Jack's eye. For a few moments he held back, hesitating what to do. Then his curiosity asserted itself, and stooping down he touched the arm with an inquisitive finger. It was rough, cold, hard—a petrified bone, encrusted with a scaly substance. He jerked it over, and as he did so, the yellow gleam came to view again.

And then he saw that it glinted from a bangle cemented to the wrist. The metal was dull and tarnished, except at one spot, where it had been scraped bright by recent friction. He tried to detach it, but it was firmly fixed. Then he exerted a little force. Whereupon the arm snapped in two at the wrist, the bangle falling to the ground, and the skeleton hand remaining in his. With a shudder he dropped it, as he would an unclean thing.

It was horrible. But, notwithstanding, he was fascinated into examining the stony surroundings, to which the arm belonged. There was but little difficulty in making them out. The small round skull, the slender neck, the spreading ribs, the lean lower limbs, contorted in the agonies of death—ghastly but undeniable remnants of a woman's frame.

A woman once, but now a mere shape in stone, with less suggestion of humanity than a mummy or skeleton. He was emboldened to stir the thing with his foot. It rolled over, and a portion of the scale that encrusted it fell away in little flaky scabs, revealing the anatomy more distinctly. He gathered courage, and picked up the hand again. It was strangely light to the feel, and when he tapped it with his knuckles, gave back a hard sound. Then he rubbed off a piece of the flaky substance between the fingers, and in doing so disclosed three rings encircling them.

He gave a whistle of surprise, and in an instant remembered how Ghaiba had mentioned that Oodmi Sing's women-

folk were adorned and decorated in silks and jewellery when they were massacred. Here was food for thought. If it was true, what treasures might there not be in this heap of petrified bodies?

They lay ready to his hand, but he hesitated. Something whispered to him it was' rifling the dead.¹⁷ He

would no one else? And after all was said and done, what harm was there in it? Had not the dead been despoiled before in the name of scientific antiquarian research? Were not the museums of the civilised world filled with the excavated treasures of Babylon, Nineveh, Pompeii? Did any stigma of



HE TOOK HIS KNIFE AND GAVE THE BRITTLE FINGERS
A RAP WITH ITS BUTT

pondered for a little, and was forced to admit it in theory. But the temptation was great, and presently he began to argue as to practice. And first, if gold was here for the gathering, what good was it to these stony fragments of humanity? If he did not despoil them,

body-snatching attach to the savants who sacked the Pyramids? Would he, as a 'sensible man, hesitate for a moment if this corpse in front of him were a thousand years old, instead of one whose tragic story he had heard from living lips but yesterday?

Then came the most potent argument of all—the rings on the hand he held in his. He took out his knife, and gave the brittle fingers a rap with its butt. They broke, and he very philosophically drew off the rings, one of which he found, on examination, was set with a stone. Clearing away the scale with his thumb-nail, he made out the stone to be a turquoise. Then he picked up the bangle, and opening his knife, began to scrape it clean. It was heavy, massive, and of purest gold. "Worth a tanner at least," commented Jack, weighing it in his hand.

That decided him. Slipping the ornaments into his pocket, he strode down to the spot where the bulk of bodies lay. A few keen glances, a little skilful handling, and he was convinced that on every shrunken arm and ghastly neck objects were crusted which could only be ornaments.

No qualm of conscience now. The lust of treasure-seeking overcame him. With a thrill of excitement, he set to work to examine the remains that lay piled at his feet. Many of the bodies were mutilated—an arm here, a leg there, a head without its trunk. Others had suffered less in their rude ejection from their sepulchre. But all yielded tribute. Every variety of ornament that Eastern womankind have for centuries delighted in were here. Necklaces, bangles, bracelets, anklets, rings of all sorts, for the fingers, the toes, the ears, the nose (many set with rough,

unpolished gems), ornaments for the hair, the bosom, and the waist.

Hour after hour Jack delved and quarried with feverish fingers amongst the heap of fossil remains, flinging aside those from which he had gathered their treasures, and plunging forward in search of fresh ones. His pockets were soon filled, and taking off his coat, he spread it on a level spot, and tossed the various trinkets on to it, until a goodly heap grew up under his eye. And reviewing it Jack thought of Oodmi Sing, and how he had collected these jewels and treasures from the harem of Moghul and the zenana of Sikh, in the doughty days when he held Rajahs to ransom, and cities under requisition.

* * * * *

The simple-minded hill-folk who still pasture their flocks about *Kiladevi Pahār* tell the story of a young Englishman who settled there for a year in defiance of the warning of Ghaiba, the *chowkeydar*. But *Kāla Devi*, outraged by the impious invasion of his sanctuary, burnt up the sahib's tea-bushes with flames of fire, created an earthquake that shattered his bungalow to the ground, and miraculously transported Ghaiba to the seventy-seventh Heaven. Whereupon the Englishman departed, and was no more seen. And from that time forward never was any found bold enough to visit the spot which the Black Demon had so particularly marked as his own.





MISS EVELYN MILLARD

From Photo by R. W. CRANE, LONDON.

A Chat with Miss Evelyn Millard

WRITTEN BY E. MAUDE BAKER. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS



TRUE artist; and the most divinely sympathetic woman upon the English stage."

The words were spoken as the curtain fell upon the final scene in "The Christian," and although I glanced round immediately in order

to discover the speaker, who had as it were put my own thoughts into words, he had long since become swallowed up in the crowd of people moving towards the stairway.

The following afternoon I called upon Miss Millard in her own home. She was resting when I arrived, but

I had only to wait a few minutes, and while doing so found much that charmed and interested me. A room always speaks to me of the individuality of its owner; Miss Millard's room was no exception to the rule—in fact, it told me more than most. At a glance one saw that it was the abode of a highly-strung, artistic, refined nature. Exquisite pictures hung from the walls, but the most interesting, and by far the most beautiful, were portraits of Miss Millard herself. The general colouring and tone of the room breathed a sense of harmony and restful peace. It was a room where one might go for quiet study—a room in which to think one's noblest, most beautiful thoughts.

"I'm so sorry to have kept you waiting," said a sweet voice, "but I am obliged to rest in the afternoons because I have been so ill. I was very ill indeed just before '*The Christian*' opened in Liverpool, in fact I was only able to attend rehearsals for a fortnight before the play commenced. Yes, thank you, I am much better now; but I am not strong yet, and I have to be very careful."

"Your part in '*The Christian*' was so very emotional, you must have been tired out after every performance," I said.

"Well, yes, I was," she answered, laughing, "but one expects that, you know. I find that my work takes up the whole of my life. However much I might want to do so, it would be impossible for me to take up any other branch of art. I have often thought how much I would like to devote some time to a regular course of reading, and, possibly, to literary work, but it is impossible at present."

"Yes," she said in answer to a query, "I am glad to have had the opportunity of playing Gloria; it has given me experience in a somewhat new line of part. It is, of course, difficult to act with enthusiasm in a play that the critics do not approve of; criticisms are, of course, bound to affect one, one way or the other; still I repeat it is very good training."

"Do you ever suffer from nervousness?"

"Oh yes, I am terribly nervous on first nights; you see one never knows

how a play will be received, and the sense of responsibility seems to grow with each fresh part one plays. For a week before a production now I can hardly eat or sleep, and though, of course, the excitement keeps me up, I feel positively ill."

"Don't you find London audiences a trifle unenthusiastic?" I asked.

"My audiences are generally very good to me," she replied, "but sometimes I would give worlds to hear a hearty laugh from the stalls during a really humorous scene. I do not say that the situation does not strike them as being humorous, but if only they would give vent to their feelings occasionally, it would make such a lot of difference to us. In the provinces audiences show their feelings much more freely."

"I cannot help liking '*The Christian*', despite the critics," I said. "Personally I never enjoyed a play more in my life. You proved my ideal '*Gloria*', and since seeing you in the part I have been able to think of you as no one else. But what was your favourite character among the many you have played?"

"I think '*Rosamund*' in Mr. Grundy's '*Sowing the Wind*', and dear '*Lady Ursula*'. And I also loved the part of '*Princess Flavia*' in '*The Prisoner of Zenda*'. I felt the character through and through as it were. '*Flavia*' was so absolutely consistent, so real, that I could not do otherwise than lose myself in the part. I enjoyed playing '*Ursula*' immensely; she was a delightful character, although up till then I had had no experience in comedy."

"I remember how greatly you impressed me as '*Portia*' in '*Julius Cæsar*'," I said; "the superb dignity of '*Portia*' suited you so admirably."

"Yes, it was a grand part, although of so little importance to the play. I have always loved acting," she continued, "in fact, I have wanted to act since the time I was a child in short petticoats. My father, who was Professor of Elocution at the Royal Academy, and Royal College of Music, used to talk to me about the great actors he had known, and I suppose his words fired my enthusiasm and made me ambitious."

"I made my first appearance in 1891, when I played 'Juliet.' Afterwards I joined Mr. Fred. Thorne's Repertoire Company, and played 'Sophia,' 'Fanny Goodwin' in 'Joseph's Sweetheart,' and 'Clara Douglas' in 'Money.' Then I was at the Adelphi for two years, playing

my favourite character 'Rosamund' in 'Sowing the Wind.' After that I played at the St. James's Theatre for two years; 'Dulcie Larondri' in 'The Masqueraders,' 'Mrs. Tanqueray,' 'Lady Harding' in 'The Idler,' 'Blanche Chilworth' in 'Liberty Hall,' 'Lois' in 'The Divided



MISS EVELYN MILLARD

From Photo by R. W. THOMAS, CHAPSIDE

'Constance' in 'The Trumpet Call,' 'Alice Lee' in 'The White Rose,' 'Sybil Garfield' in 'The Lights of Home,' 'Polly Fletcher' in 'The Lost Paradise,' and 'Lady Mildred Dashwood' in 'The Black Domino.' In 1894 I joined Mr. Comyns Carr's Company, when I played

Way,' 'Princess Flavia' in 'The Prisoner of Zenda.' These two years at the St. James's did me more good than all my previous experience. Mr. Alexander taught me a very great deal, and though at the time his corrections used to fret me and make me rather downhearted,

now that I look back I see how right he was, and I feel nothing but gratitude to him. During my second season with him we played 'Liberty Hall' at Balmoral before Her Majesty. I look upon that episode as quite the most pleasant of my theatrical career. We were treated with the utmost consideration; we heard afterwards that the Queen had herself inspected our dressing rooms to see that they were comfortable. We wandered about the grounds in the afternoon, and were photographed there. After the performance we were all presented to Her Majesty. I had a very pretty red enamel and diamond brooch sent to me, which of course I value very much.

"After a little interval I had a season with Mr. Tree, playing 'Portia' in 'Julius Cæsar'; then I joined Mr. Charles Frohman, to play 'Ursula' in 'The Adventures' of Lady Ursula."

"And now will you tell me something about 'Miss Hobbs'?" I asked.

"Well, it is a dear little piece, very bright, and I think just what audiences want at the present moment, when everything and everybody around one is in such a terrible state of depression. Personally, although 'Miss Hobbs' is not the sort of part with which I have been associated, I feel it is a relief to be playing her after all the hard work I have been lately accustomed to. Mind you, I don't say I should always like to do such light work, in fact I should dislike it very much; but just at present it forms a contrast, which I think is always good for one, and one can go back again with fresh impetus to more serious work. Then the piece goes so brightly, and the audience seem so thoroughly to enjoy it, that it is quite cheering to hear them. I should think it bids fair to be a great success and enjoy a long run."

"Can you tell me anything about your future plans?"

"Well, I have decided nothing beyond this present season with Mr. Frohman. I am very happy under his management; I have never been more comfortable; but of course, if one is ambitious, one's chief thought is for the parts. One of

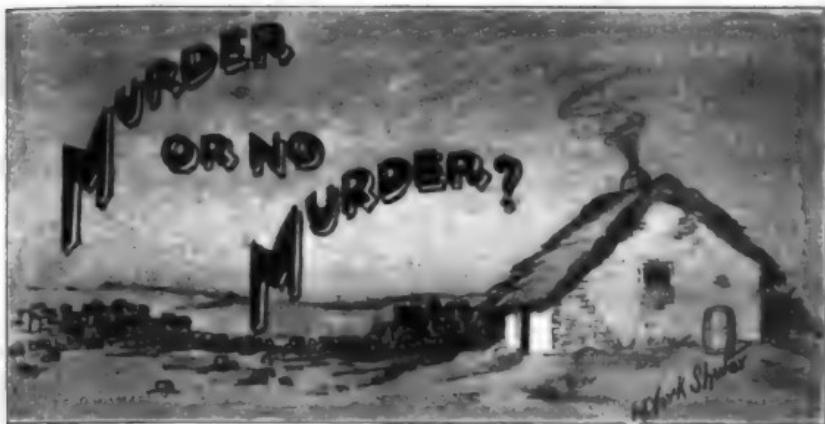
my chief ambitions is to play a fine Shakesperian part; I shall not rest until it is realised, but of course it may mean waiting for some time. I think if I could play 'Rosalind,' 'Viola,' 'Portia,' and 'Juliet' before a London audience I should die happy. I don't want much, do I? Speaking of 'Juliet' reminds me of the season I had at dear old Sarah Thorne's at Margate. What a good time it was to be sure! I played 'Juliet' with about three rehearsals. One never saw the scenery or the properties till the night of performance. I shall never forget my dismay at having to mount up in the Balcony scene on several rickety egg boxes. I was quite unable to get a steady footing all through the scene, and several times when I was leaning over to touch my 'Romeo's' hand I only saved myself with a jerk from precipitating myself on the top of his head. The bed that I had to throw myself upon was a hard, hard little sofa, and I remember the moon wobbling and shifting about in the most extraordinary way. Still, I was very happy, for if one felt worried there was plenty of fun going on. Now one has plenty of worry and responsibility, and rehearsals can hardly be described as funny.

"I don't think I have ever had any very striking adventures, nor any very terrible mishaps. I love my work, and nothing in life gives me more genuine pleasure than to feel that I am in sympathy with my audience."

"They feel it," I said, rising to take my departure, "and that is why you have won all hearts."

As I said "Goodbye" to my hostess. I noticed how extremely delicate and fragile she looked; but she appeared to me far, far more beautiful than she has ever done upon the stage, where she is universally recognised as the most beautiful, as well as the most charming English actress. But perhaps I was most charmed by her manner, which was simple, sweet, and unaffected to a degree.

My visit to her will ever remain in my memory as one of the pleasantest and most interesting afternoons I have ever spent in my life.



WRITTEN BY ISABEL ORMAN.

ILLUSTRATED BY M. YORK SHUTER

"**S**HURE, thin, it's the Devil and the pygmies and the fairies that have more to do with this life thin the Lord God Almighty Hisself; or even the Blessed Mother or the Holy Saints. It ain't no use takin' care av inything, for the devils and fairies are that knowin' that they pounce down on a lonesome mortal afore he knows wheriver he is a-goin' or whaterver he is a-doin'. The Devil has but to look at the cattle and they wither away like the grass, or jist to cast his eye over the poor little chickens and they fall sick an' die. And thin, ye know, the fairies be mortal fond of humans. I mind hearin' my grandfather tell a story that jist shows how unbeknownsome are the ways av devils an' fairies. My grandfather's mother was aunt to the poor bhoy who was took by the fairies, so I knows well the tale is thru. He was comin' home wan evenin', wid his brother, quiet as iny lamb, whin he heard a singin' and a laughin' ahint the hedge. Some av the fairies were peekin' through the hedge, an' they telt the ithers mortals were about. In wan second the singin' became jist beautiful, and the poor bhoy as had stopped to listen wint on tiptoes to see fwhat all the row was about.

Faith! and it was a sight he saw! All the fairy ladies were there dancin' like mad. They had strawy hair and their eyes shone like stars. They was dressed all in white, an' they jist danced an' danced an' danced. Thin wan av them sees the bhoy a-lookin' on, and she comes up to him and whispers softly in his ear. Mayhap the bhoy was mazed—mayhap he could not help hisself—inhyow he wint wid her, an' his brother saw him wid his own eyes dancin' an' dancin', wid the fairy queen's arms around him an' her strawy hair coverin' him all over jist like a cloak. In the marnin', whin the brother looked he saw nothin' inywhere but trees and green grass—no fairies, no nothin', only buttercups an' daisies; his brother had gone wid the fairies, and niver since has he been seen by mortal eyes. That's proof sartain, ain't it, that the fairies be stronger thin the Lord God Almighty?"

It was with sentiments such as these that Bridget O'Flannagan was wont to regale her admiring audience of un-washed friends, on her occasional visits to the Market Square of Killknockham. She had no intention of being blasphemous, and would have held up her hands, grubby though they always were, in horror at the bare suggestion of such an idea. The actual personality of the

Devil and fairies was a great deal nearer her comprehension than the existence of a God of Mercy. It was her firm belief that the Devil was the ruler of the Universe and master of the world. Thus it will be seen that she was by no means an educated being or possessed of overmuch intelligence. How could she be? She lived at the "Swan's Nest," a fact which speaks volumes.

It was a white-washed cabin, situated on the borders of an almost immeasurable bog. Once it had possessed a thatched roof and a glass window; now in the places where the roof had worn away Barney O'Flannagan, Bridget's husband, had placed pieces of straw matting and old rags. At night a board was put up against the broken pane, which was taken down in the day-time, the holes being stuffed with more rags if the day were cold. No tree would grow near the cabin, and its only ornamentation was the ever-increasing rubbish heap which stood in too close proximity to gain the approval of even the most lenient of sanitary inspectors. But the cabin stood too far away from civilisation for its inmates to be troubled by such annoyances as sanitary inspectors. There was no town nearer than Killknockham, and that was eight Irish miles away. Half-way between the two was a small cluster of cabins which sometimes proved convenient; as the Wise Woman lived in one of them; and Bridget had a superstitious belief in the efficacy of her cures.

What had induced Barney to bring his bride to such a dreary place was an unsolved problem, even to himself; but it was the characteristic Irish laziness inherent in both their natures that had made them remain there for twenty uneventful years. Barney's work was to cut peat into blocks and then dry it in stacks, and the work had so dulled his senses that he almost imagined there was none other to be done in the world. Bridget was almost as bad. Her sole occupation was boiling potatoes or baking potato cakes, an occupation she did not vary by over-cleaning either her person or cabin. She was no pattern housewife, and the presence of dirt troubled her but little. Indeed her only source of worry was the ever-present chance of a

probable potato famine. These details are necessary to prove the uncivilised character of the inmates of the "Swan's Nest." Existence there could never have been productive of any intellectual or moral superiority. Barney and Bridget had lived there for twenty years; Molly all her life. Had Barney chosen a large town, or any more civilised part of the country in which to live, the tragedy related here could never have happened.

But Bridget, in spite of everything, was a devout Catholic. She was very particular about going to Mass when opportunity offered, and she always crossed herself religiously when assailed by any great temptation. Her sole dissipation was the Revival Mission held annually in Killknockham Chapel. To hear Father Paul's soul-stirring words she would willingly have walked double the distance she did. This eloquent preacher, in her estimation, was the greatest of prophets living or dead, and she firmly believed every word he spoke. Had these words possessed any influence on Bridget's daily life there might have been some good in her regular attendance at the services; but they only roused the sensational part of her nature, and awoke in her a terrible dread of the future life to which she was hurrying. Father Paul's words, soul-stirring as they were, did not teach her either to speak the truth or to resist the alluring delights of the "crayture." Poor Bridget; often would she walk home with the tears streaming down her cheeks at the thought of the Devil and his malignant spite. Father Paul said that he spent his time trampling on the heads of those unfortunate beings who had been forced to make his home theirs also, and that no human mind could comprehend the awful miseries laid up in store for unrepentant sinners, or conceive any idea of the heat of the fires the Devil kindled with his own hands—fires fiercer a hundredfold than the fiercest of earthly furnaces. He possessed a vivid imagination, which, with an ultra-Calvinistic turn of opinion, was useful to him as a mission preacher. Unfortunately his hearers deemed his words the words of the Church, and therefore to be believed in all their

awfulness. Even Purgatory, with its penal fires and probable chance of escape, was drawn with such lurid vividness that had Dante been there to hear he would certainly have shuddered. And for even the best on earth there must be Purgatory.

It was shortly after one of these Revival Missions that Barney fell ill. It was nearing Christmas, and the money which might have been spent in a better dinner for that day had to be spent in procuring the herbs so necessary for the ancient cures of which Bridget knew. The poor black cat on the premises suffered considerably while his tail grew beautifully less, for one drop of a black cat's blood was worth more to Bridget than the whole Pharmacopeia put together. But Barney did not improve under her treatment. He was not a pleasant person to look at, and one even the bravest would rather not meet in a dark lane alone at night. He simply looked "bludgeons and knuckledusters," but Bridget said he had his good points. "Every man has his wakeness," Bridget would at times remark with exemplary patience, "no wan must expect impossibilities. A man must talk and swear, and he must beat. It's his nature. They can't kape their tempers." But in spite of everything Bridget was fond of Barney, and Molly said he wasn't "bad as fathers wint!" which certainly was something in his favour, considering what an uncivilised specimen of humanity he was.

Bridget had no faith in doctors, and nothing would induce her to send for the doctor from Killknockham. He was an "empty-headed dunderhead," she said, and she would dilate, in language peculiarly her own, of an experience she herself had gone through at his hands. Once, when suffering from a bad sore throat, she had called him in and had conscientiously taken the medicines he had sent without benefiting from them in the least. It was only after a visit to the Wise Woman that she was in any way bettered. The Wise Woman's treatment had worked wonders at once—and such a simple remedy as it was too. Only a bit of red worsted tied round her throat and another round her wrist! Who would

drink the filthiness the "dunderhead" sent, with such simple remedies at hand.

It was exactly a week before Christmas that Barney took to his bed.

"Faith, Molly, but I'm thinkin' we be in fur a funeral," Bridget said, three days after the sickness first began.

"Will I be goin' fur the Wise Woman, mother?" Molly asked, her heart beating quicker than its wont at the thought of a funeral—a form of amusement she particularly revelled in.

"Will ye be goin', indade! If ye had been inything av a daughter ye would have got her here by now, a-curin' av yer father?"

This was unjust on Bridget's part, for it was she who had insisted on curing Barney herself, and had steadily refused to have any "medicine man" in the house.

"No wan loves him as we do, darlint," she told Molly: "an' no wan else will be doin' for him, if my name is Bridget O'Flannagan."

At last, scorning the advance of civilisation, Bridget sent for the Wise Woman; who came, but could effect no cure. Barney welcomed her warmly by way of emphasising his little "wakenesses," and consigned her to a warmer place than any the world can produce. No words of magic could stop the torrent of oaths and heartrending groans that issued from the cabin in which the sick man lay. All day long he lay on his bed swearing at the Devil, and praying the Holy Mother to have mercy upon him. At last the Wise Woman made a discovery.

"Shure, it's the evil ways of yer father which has brought him to this," were her consoling words to Molly, as she walked across the deary tract of land which lay between her cottage and the "Swan's Nest." "Fur swearin', an' beatin' his women-folk, and wastin' his time, there nivir was sich a wan as yer father. The Holy Saints grant that the Devil has no got hold av him."

But, unfortunately, this she found was just what had happened. As soon as she entered the room the Wise Woman shivered. And no wonder; for on looking at her patient she saw "the Devil peekin' out av baith his eyes."

"Shure," she exclaimed, "in ivry



"THE HOLY SAINTS GRANT THAT THE DIVIL HAS NO GOT HOLD AV HIM."

liniment I see the Wicked Wan. Oh, Barney O'Flannagan, that ye should iver have come to this pass."

Her mode of procedure was simple and direct. There was one way of "liftin' the evil" she explained, and there was also another. A praste did it one way—a Wise Woman another.

"Barney's bad—mortal bad," she said. "Words will help him naught. The evil has to be lifted, and lifted it will be, or my name's not Eileen Machree."

Her way of "lifting the evil" was to lay him flat on his back, a change of position he emphasised in somewhat strong language.

"Be aisy thin, ye wicked ould sinner," she said, throwing the bedclothes back with a firm hand. She then placed a penny on the region of his stomach, and on this she put a lighted candle, and above all a well-dried tumbler.

"Do ye feel yer skin drawin' up?" she whispered to the sick man after a while.
"I do," he groaned.

"Do ye feel as if ye had been cupped?"

"I do."

"Thin, Barney O'Flannagan, git up an' walk, fur the evil is gone out av ye."

But Barney's illness was not so easily cured. He made an effort to rise, fell back with a groan, and commenced swearing as lustily as ever. That evening Molly walked into Killknockham and brought out the "medicine man." But it was too late—Barney's time had come—Barney had to die—there was no more hope for Barney O'Flannagan.

The next day was Christmas Eve, and Molly sat dutifully by the bedside watching. She was a pretty girl, with the characteristic Irish eyes heavily fringed with dark eyelashes. If the truth were known, her thoughts were more with the finery she had intended wearing at the early morning Mass the next day than with her dying father. The thought of the Mass roused the religious instinct dormant in

her, and made her glance at the man lying, groaning pitifully, on the bed. The look on his face filled her with a sudden fear. Molly, too, had listened to Father Paul's soul-stirring words only a short fortnight ago.

"Father," she said solemnly, "ye're goin' to die, ye are. The Wise Woman from Clondore and the 'medicine man' from Killknockham telled it to me an' mother this blessed marnin'. The praste says ye'd better make yer peace wid God. Ye've been bad, father, a rale bad man. Ye've thought more av the 'crarythure' thin av God or the Holy Mother. May the Blessed Saints presarve yer soul from destruction, father—may—"

Molly stopped abruptly. A sudden thought entered her mind, and she rose with crimson cheeks and dilating eyes. It was Christmas Eve, and her father was dying. The memory of an old superstition brought by her mother from West Meath rushed through her mind—for those who die as the clock is

striking midnight on the Eve of Christmas there is no Purgatory.

Later on she returned to the bedside, her duty pressing heavily on her mind.

"Father," she said, "ye've but a few hours to live. Ye'd better make yer peace wid God. There's Hell, father, an'there's overlastin' fire. There's Purgatory, where ye've got to work penance ; and there's Heaven, father, where the Blessed Mother is. But it's to Purgatory all must go. Arrah ! thin, lie still —lie still."

The sick man moaned in pain and sank into unconsciousness. The time for preaching was over.

"Mother," said Molly, late that evening, "hould yer row an' listen."

Bridget threw the apron she wore over her head and howled more loudly than ever.

"Hould yer row an' listen," interrupted Molly undutifully. "The Blessed Saints have sent their comfort. 'Tis Christmas Eve."

"Shure enough it is," sobbed Bridget. "'Tis twenty year come to-morrow since——"

"Och, faith ! have done wid yer rememberings. Have yer thought 'tis Christmas Eve ?"

"Faith, thin, I have. Ah, my darlint, is it ye that is mad ? What mane ye by 'tis Christmas Eve ?"

"Did the dother say as father would never be well, mother ?"

"That shure enough he did, my darlint. Och, Barney, my heart's darlint, stay wid me !—stay wid me !"

"Whin will it be, mother ?"

"Maybe in a few minutes—maybe in a few hours ; leastways, Molly, darlint, yer father must die—he wan't be here to-morrow marnin'."

"Was he sartain shure ?"

"He was shure enough, asthore ! 'There's no hope fur him, Mrs. O'Flannagan,' he says—'no hope at all. Die he must afore the marnin's light ?'"

"Thin, mother, take comfort. 'Tis Christmas Eve."

"Faith, an' fwhat's the matter wid the girl ! Do ye want to drive me crazy wid yer words ? Yer lazy lout av a darter, fwhat mane yer by repatin' 'tis Christmas Eve ?' Ye'll no be wearin' yer new ribbons, I'm thinkin'."

"I was no' thinkin' av my clraithes, mother. Have yer forgotten about Christmas Eve ?"

Bridget rose—her hand uplifted. The child was "craz'd" sure enough. The evil from out of her father was entering into her. But the hand she held up remained uplifted, for on Molly's face a look of wonder and rapture was passing.

"Mother, don't ye mind," she said in slow distinct tones, "thim as dies whin the clock is strikin' twelve on Christmas Eve goes straight into the joys av Hiven—straight to the feet av the Blessed Virgin. Fur thim, mother, ye know there is no Purgatory."

Bridget's arm dropped down to her side once more, while a gleam of intelligent comprehension passed across her heavy features.

"Ye're jist the blessedest child livin'. The Holy Saints grant that father may not die too soon."

Late that evening Bridget sat holding her husband's hand in hers, anxiously scanning his paling face. She was sad at heart, poor woman, for it was a matter of custom and religion that no man should pass away with only his family around him. But Barney's friends were few and far between ; and as influenza was raging, many of those few were themselves laid up. Both priests and doctors had their work cut out for them. So it came to pass that only his wife and daughter were there to see Barney O'Flannagan die.

Molly sat at the foot of the bed, her eyes gleaming with excitement. Her father was dying, and they were going to have a funeral. She kept glancing at the clock, whose hands were now pointing to eleven. Would he die at the right moment, she wondered. Oh, what a difference that one right moment would make to the future awaiting him ! All the dramatic instinct within her was at work on the vivid contrast presented by the two pictures before her eyes. On the one side Heaven and all its brightness, its joys, its happiness ; on the other, Purgatory, with its penal fires and unending list of penances, its miseries, its pains. Molly, in her rough way, loved her father, and wished to spare him this.

THE LUDGATE

Come what might, he must die at the right moment.

"Mother," she whispered, "is he dead?"

"Indade, no, my darlint, the breath is in him still. May the Saints above have pity! 'Tis another hour to midnight, thin."

The time passed slowly by, the minute hand went slowly round—now past the quarter—now past the half-hour. The wind outside was drifting the snow in under the door, and it was bitterly cold, for the fire had gone out. Both watchers were too intent on thinking of the issue of the next few minutes to move from the bedside. It was a quarter to twelve now, and the sick man stirred and moaned. Was it a reality, or was it only fancy that made Molly imagine he seemed stronger. Her heart began to beat furiously. As the man must die, he must die at the right moment—just as the clock was striking twelve!

"Mother, he's stronger," she cried fearfully, as her father stirred once more.

"He can't live, Molly, my darlint. His sickness must kill him in time. The Wise Woman telt it to me and the medicine man."

Five minutes later and Barney was still alive, and five minutes later there was still no sign of immediate death. Then Bridget rose.

"My darlint," she whispered, "ye love yer ould father, don't ye?"

"I do, mother."

"Thin—"

Bridget turned and looked at Molly, and Molly understood the full meaning of that look and of that single word.

Both were standing near the bed now. As the seconds went quickly on both heads drooped lower and lower—both minds were strung to their tightest tension. But still the dying man's breath did not cease; there was an ominous rattle in his throat; his hand



"MOLLY RAISED THE PILLOW"

was no colder now than it had been half an hour before. Then slowly the clock began to strike the hour of twelve—and the man was breathing still. There was no time to lose, the strokes followed each other with a sure and distinct sound.

One! Molly started and stood erect.

Two! Molly went round to the head of the bed, and the dying man sighed.

Three! Molly looked at her mother, and Bridget looked at her.

Four! Bridget nodded, and Molly drew the pillow from under her dying father's head.

Five! Molly raised the pillow—and . . .

The pendulum swung from side to side as the seconds went on and the clock continued to strike.

Six! The wind beat furiously against the door and mingled its sound with the moans in the room.

Seven!

Eight!

Nine!

Ten!

Eleven! Twelve!

A great and awful silence! It was Christmas morning, and Barney O'Flannagan was dead!



From a Photo by LAELIA CARET-CHARLES



M. CANNON AND FLYING FOX

Horse-racing in 1899

WRITTEN BY E. ANTHONY.

ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

TEMPUS fugit. It seems well nigh incredible that the appointed time is once more with us, when a *résumé* of the racing season of 1899 has to be written. Yet a full twelve months has elapsed since I pointed out to the readers of THE LUDGATE the probability of Flying Fox filling out into the best three-year-old of his year. At the same time I remember cautioning our countrymen to beware of M. de Bremond's *Holocauste*, a grey, whose credentials were excellent, and, in this connection, it is interesting to recall that on Derby Day the big race was generally regarded in the light of a match between the pair.

Of course the brilliant performances of Flying Fox afford the most striking features of the outgoing season. As a three-year-old he has not once met with defeat, indeed one may go further and assert that he has never been seriously pushed. Wearer of the triple crown, Flying Fox, ere the close of his wonderful career, bids fair to add yet another record to the annals of the Turf. During the forthcoming season he

should wrest from Isinglass the distinction of having won in stakes the largest sum ever gained by a single horse. Isinglass, as the result of eleven victories in twelve outings, aggregated £57,185. Already Flying Fox has won in stakes the nice little fortune of £40,096. Great differences of opinion have always prevailed as to which horses shall, and which horses shall not, be classed among the greatest of their age, and in any case next year will be time enough to allot the son of Orme his niche in the roll of fame. Fully realising, therefore, how impossible it is to form any really satisfactory estimate as to the relative merits of famous horses of to-day and their predecessors, the writer can at least hazard the opinion that the supremacy of Ormonde and St. Simon remains unshaken, seeing that neither ever met with defeat.

When a record of the century's racing comes to be written, the past season will of a surety be associated with the triumphant invasion of Britain by the American jockeys, Sloan, the brothers Reiff, and Martin. Towards the commencement of the campaign, Sloan was

regarded as simply invincible, consequently the prices obtainable against his mounts shrunk to a suicidal extent. Had he not, at the Newmarket Craven Meeting ridden four winners in consecutive races, claiming altogether five successes on the afternoon? Then did not Lord William Beresford's horses and the American form for a long while an all conquering combination? Nevertheless, the vagaries of fortune had to be taken into account, the time being not far distant when the same interests appeared unable to do the right thing. It was then that L. Reiff appeared on the horizon, and coming to the rescue of his fellow-countryman, had in a very few weeks established a brilliant reputation. So remarkable indeed were his achievements that small punters blindly transferred their allegiance to the newcomer, and the soundness of their judgment has been fully vindicated since then. Quite as noteworthy in its way has been the wonderful riding of little fourteen-year old Reiff, a youngster who barely turns the scale at four stone. Thrice blessed with the facility for getting horses home at long odds, the lad has, among other feats, accomplished the "hat trick," the ambition of many an older and more experienced jockey. With such a brave example set them, I shall not be surprised to find other American jockeys trying their luck with us next season.

As of yore, hostilities commenced at Lincoln, where the Lincolnshire Handicap brought out the largest field since Wise Man won the event in 1889. Twenty-six candidates faced the starter, and seldom has an important handicap been contested by a more representative party. The race itself, unfortunately, proved a veritable one-horse gallop, General Peace cantering in a ridiculously easy winner by four lengths from Sloan's mount, Knight of the Thistle; while Nun Nicer being eased, Lord Edward II. filled the third berth on sufferance. Outside the "General's" stable few people profited by his success, for Captain Bewicke's five-year-old had worn out the patience of the most devoted of his public admirers. The Brocklesby Stakes, decided at the same meeting, acquainted the

race-goer with a singular record, Hulcot's ready victory enabling John Watson's stable to harbour the winner of this event for the fourth season in succession.

The Grand National attracted an enormous company to Aintree, howbeit the race was robbed of much of its interest owing to the mishap to Droguedha. Last year's winner, it appears, had the misfortune to sprain his hock in the stable, an unavoidable occurrence which necessitated his being struck out of the race at the eleventh hour. His absence and the chapter of accidents ever closely connected with the great steeplechase, paved the way to Manifesto's meritorious victory. The public dearly like to see a good horse win, and it was eminently satisfactory to find Manifesto following in the footsteps of Peter Simple, Abdel Kadir, The Lamb and The Colonel, the previous dual winners. His victory under 12st. 7lb. also equalled the performance of the renowned Cloister. Possibly, had Gentle Ida not fallen, a different result might have been chronicled, for the mare fairly smothered Dead Level, at Kempton Park, where she met him on 11lbs. worse terms than at Liverpool, and it was Dead Level, be it remembered, who finished third to Manifesto and Ford of Fyne in the chase. Mr. Bulteel, the owner of Manifesto, won a prodigious sum over the result, and was so delighted with his favourite's success that he presented Williamson with £2,000 as his share for riding the winner.

Whilst on the subject of steeple-chasing, I may add, that towards the beginning of April there was some talk of a match, at even weights, being arranged between Manifesto and Gentle Ida. Mr. Bulteel in particular was very anxious to see the pair matched; however, Mr. Bottomley, in view of Gentle Ida's valuable engagement in the Grand Steeplechase of Paris, had perforce to decline Mr. Bulteel's challenge. The latter's ambition to own the admittedly best chaser of the day was very laudable, yet few sportsmen are likely to find fault with Mr. Bottomley's refusal, much though everyone would have delighted in such a struggle.

The Liverpool Cup perhaps afforded the most exciting finish of the season, Crestfallen and Grodno running a desperate race home, which culminated in a dead-heat. Chubb, who finished only a short head behind the pair, towards the close of the season so far distinguished himself as to carry off the Liverpool Autumn Cup. As so often happens, however, his followers had long since lost all faith in him, forgetting for the nonce, that in horseflesh as in everything else, the old proverb will

having previously gained first honours on Reve D'Or, Nunthorpe, Reminder, and Worcester. Quite a feature of the race this season was its international flavour. Of the party of seventeen, four hailed from Australia, one from America, and another from France, the Colonies actually furnishing first and second past the post, Newhaven II. winning readily enough from Survivor. This reminds me that after running up in this same race last year, Newhaven cost his connections a mint of money, losing race



EPSOM STAND, CITY AND SUBURBAN DAY

be served, "It is never too late to mend."

The City and Suburban has for some time past been regarded as Mornington Cannon's special property. Mornington, the horse, after whom the jockey was named, won this handicap in 1873, and thus early in life, "Morny" may be said to have taken a lively interest in the race and its subsequent history. Cannon's victory on Newhaven, makes the fifth success he has scored in the "City" within the last ten years, he

after race, a remark which applies with equal force to Survivor, who, since his second in the big Epsom handicap, has times out of number flattered his supporters only that he might the more cruelly deceive them. Onward is our watchword, and we next alight at Newmarket. Here the "Classic" campaign opens. Suffice to say that never was a Two Thousand Guineas won with such ridiculous ease as in April of this year. Although the cause of considerable delay at the post, Flying Fox almost

immediately took the lead and might doubtless have won by a dozen lengths had Cannon felt so "disposed." On all sides it was acknowledged that the Kingsclere champion had come on in remarkable fashion since his two-year-old days. His victory enabled the Duke of Westminster to repeat the successes he had gained in the race with Shotover in 1882, and the peerless Ormonde in 1886. The fillies, if we except Irish Ivy, who played no part in the "classics," follow the colts at a respectful distance, and little importance attaches to the success of the much fancied Sibola in the One Thousand.

It is an established fact that heavily weighted competitors run well in the "Jubilee," or the race would never have been won by Minting (9st.), Bendigo (9st. 7lb.), Victor Wilde (9st. 7lb.), Orvieto (9st. 5 lb.), and Nunthorpe (9st.). Consequently many astute judges pinned their faith to Newhaven II. to pull them through this journey, despite the crushing burden of 9st. 10lb. which the Australian was called upon to put up. A lengthy delay at the post fairly destroyed the chances of the top-sawyer, and Knight of the Thistle, making ample amends for his preceding breach of manners, safely and soberly carried Sir Blundell Maple's colours to the front. How such an astute stable as the Bedford House should ever have allowed Knight of the Thistle to slip through its fingers remains a mystery,

the "Knight" having been purchased for 610 guineas at the weeding-out sale of Mr. H. McCalmont in December, 1898.

Unhappily, the race for the Blue Riband of the Turf was marred by an untoward accident to Holocauste, which alas cut short the promising career of the French colt. Just as Holocauste, following on the heels of Flying Fox into the straight, had all the appearance of finishing second to the Duke of Westminster's crack, he pulled up suddenly and subsequent examination disclosed that M. de Bremond's colt had smashed one of his pasterns so severely that nothing was left save to destroy him. I do not think the issue of the race was affected one whit by the accident, as Flying Fox had to all intents and purposes the verdict in safe keeping, yet the mishap was none the less a calamitous upset to the sporting enterprise of M. de Bremond. The Derby has now fallen to the share of the Duke of Westminster on no fewer than four occasions, his winners in addition to Flying Fox being Bend Or, in 1880, Shotover in 1882, and Ormonde in 1886, and the distinction is enhanced by the fact that all but Shotover were bred in his Grace's famous Eaton stud.

Turning to the Oaks, Musa must be deemed a very fortunate young lady, inasmuch as had not Sibola and Princess Mary lost so much ground at the start they would unquestionably have beaten



SITTING NEAR THE RAILS IN THE PADDOCK, ASCOT

her. Even as it was Sibola ought to have won, and Sloan's judgment was sadly at fault for once in a way, seeing that the American made up most of his lost ground uphill. The field for the race mustered a dozen, as did that for the Derby, whilst another coincidence was forthcoming in so far as M. Cannon, who steered Flying Fox, and Madden, who rode Musa, achieved victory in their respective races for the first time in the course of their meritorious careers.

No meeting is more dependent upon the weather for its success than Ascot, and in this respect the Royal meeting

collared and beaten by a lightly-weighted candidate in the last hundred yards. I refer to Refractor, a three-year-old, carrying 6st. 3lb., who gave that likely youngster little Wetherall his first big winner. A couple of days later, and admirably suited by the shorter distance, Eager came out again and won the Wokingham Stakes under the big impost of 9st. 7lb. It was a deservedly popular success, the performance stamping Mr. Fairie's horse as a rare smasher. Cyllene ran his last race at the meeting, his runaway victory in the Gold Cup producing one of the most notable performances of the season.



FINISH OF THE ROYAL HUNT CUP, 1899

was particularly favoured this summer. It seems a terrible pity that steps are not taken to make the course more fit to race upon in dry weather, as, after all, the racing should be the chief consideration, not the pretty dresses. Apparently no effort is made to remedy the deplorable state of things now existing; the valuable prizes offered being in themselves sufficient inducement to owners to run their horses. The *pièce de résistance* at Ascot is, of course, the Royal Hunt Cup, for which event Eager ran a great race, although

When called upon, he simply left his opponents standing still, and the opposition was not to be despised considering that it included Hermenius, Gardefeu, and Lord Edward II. Had Cyllene not broken down in his training it was quite on the cards that the four-year-old would have tried conclusions with Flying Fox in the Champagne Stakes at the Newmarket October Meeting, and then what a battle royal would have been witnessed. As it was, Flying Fox had only to win a Ten Thousand Pounder or so, and the



A ST. LEGER CROWD

St. Leger, to conclude his season's programme, performances he satisfactorily accomplished.

Glorious Goodwood was graciously endowed with a spell of most beautiful weather, yet there was a marked falling off in the attendance of the general public. Again, the feature of the racing here was the gallant attempt of that good little horse Eager to win under a burden exceeding rost. But it was not to be, Northern Farmer at length rewarding Mr. Bottomley for the pluck and enterprise he has shown since joining the ranks of owners, a welcome turn in the wheel of fortune. The unlucky Nun Nicer finished second, a berth she also filled in the Drayton Handicap.

It would be idle to affect that the Cesarewitch holds precisely the same position as it did years ago. For all that, the long distance race remains a prominent land mark in the programme of the back end, and last October, twenty-two competitors contested the question of supremacy. The market

honours were shared by Scintillant and Irish Ivy, and as the former was caught on his best behaviour he fought out the finish with Ercildoune, one of Darling's fancied goods. A gamier struggle has seldom been waged, the son of Sheen, in the hands of F. Wood, getting home from Ercildoune by a head, the latter's penalty earned in the Duke of York Stakes, proving a shade too much for his powers of endurance. F. Wood had actually put off his wedding day, that he might ride Scintillant, virtue thus gaining its own reward.

Ould Oireland secured the spoils in the Cambridgeshire, that handsome filly Irish Ivy holding the issue in safe keeping. So easily was the victory accomplished, that some easing-up took place when the hopelessness of pursuit was realised. Generally, sane people completely lost their heads over that terribly overrated article Oban, a lot of money being foolishly thrown away. Private reputations are kittle-cattle. Kempton Cannon, who rode a cool and well-timed race on the winner,

has now won the Cambridgeshire twice, having previously steered Comfrey in 1897. In this connection hangs a curious coincidence, Irish Ivy having occupied the same box as did Comfrey two years back.

The closing stages of the season were mainly notable for the fine form displayed by Lord Ellesmere's three-year-old Proclamation. The son of Hampton and Protocol was only beaten a neck by Chubb for the Liverpool Autumn Cup, a defeat he quickly avenged by winning the Derby Cup. The penalty entailed by this success to all appearances put him out of court for the Manchester November Handicap, but with Sloan up, Proclamation again snatched the verdict from Invincible II., all three of the aforementioned races being won and lost by the narrow margin of a neck.

Remarkable, too, was the riding of the American jockeys, who between them fairly swept the board by claiming the last five races of the out-going season.

Turning our attention to the two-year-olds, Democrat and Forfarshire stand out from amongst their less favoured rivals, and for the best part of the season Democrat was regarded as the most promising youngster of his year. His victory in the rich National Breeders Produce Stakes emphasised his pretensions, although Forfarshire was unlucky to lose this valuable stake, being badly hampered in the early stages of the contest. Still, as Democrat was conceding 9lb., it was thought to more than wipe out Forfarshire's claims upon the exchequer of ill-fortune. That this view of the circumstances of the case was an erroneous one was subsequently demonstrated at Kempton, where Democrat, in receipt of 3lb. from Forfarshire, was in his turn beaten a head by the latter. Obviously, very little can divide the pair, but believing as I do that Democrat had had about enough of it by the time he retired into

winter quarters, I shall expect him to figure most prominently in the classic races, even should he just fail to win the triple crown. Forfarshire is, unfortunately, only entered in the Derby.

I have already referred to some of the leading jockeys of the day, and shall only add that we at least have the consolation left us of hailing Sam Loates as at the top of this particular tree, albeit he and his countrymen fall beneath the Americans when percentages of wins to losses come to be reckoned up. Further cause for congratulation is also to be derived by Englishmen, inasmuch as Loates has not only ridden many tight finishes with Sloan, but has almost invariably had the best of them.

Essentially a one-horse year, the fine performances of Flying Fox are responsible for Orme's position at the head of our winning sires for 1899. His succession of triumphs are also the means of awarding the palm amongst owners to the Duke of Westminster, and to John Porter pride of place amongst trainers, although the master of Kingsclere is very closely run by that clever American trainer Huggins, whose horses have picked up between them no fewer than seventy-two races.

The Jockey Club is a very conservative body, and therefore its members are to be the more heartily congratulated upon the wisdom of their resolution to give the starting machine a trial next year, when our two-year-olds will be brought under its soothing influences. Backers must surely heave a sigh of relief at this decision, for nowadays the number of bad starts seems on the increase. Lord Durham was the leading spirit in the movement, and his masterly championship is deserving of all honour. Ere long, I hope to see the starting machine universally adopted, and look forward confidently to its remedying many old abuses. We shall see what we shall see.

BALLADE OF YOUTH AND SPRING

STAGG'RING like some half-palsied thing,
 Old Winter, gaunt and grey,
 Departs, as, blithely carolling,
 Spring saunters up the way.
 Now lengthen out the hours of day
 'Twixt dawn and sunsetting ;
 The nights grow short, as loth to stay.
 Heigh-ho for Youth and Spring !

The birds are busy nest-building,
 Is nought as busy as they ;
 They are mating and they are marrying,
 For Love, warm Love, has sway.
 In hedge and lane each bush and spray
 Is green with blossoming ;
 All Earth resumes her wardrobe gay.
 Heigh-ho for Youth and Spring !

Soon shall the vales and wildwood ring
 With many a roundelay,
 Where boy and maid together sing,
 As down the glades they stray.
 Young Love strolls forth to sport and play,
 And o'er his arm doth sling
 The arrows barbed to wound, not slay.
 Heigh-ho for Youth and Spring !

Envoy.

Prince ! all in turn must fall the prey
 Of Death, the ambushed King ;
 But we'll be merry while we may.
 Heigh-ho for Youth and Spring !

J. J. ELLIS.



CHANCE MOUNTAIN, MONTSERRAT. LIME PLANTATIONS IN THE FOREGROUND

From a Photo lent by Messrs. EVANS, SONS & CO., Liverpool

The Island of the Limes

WRITTEN BY EDWARD TEBBUTT. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS



IT was the ubiquitous Christopher Columbus who, engaged in erratic peregrination throughout the Caribbean Sea, was the first to discover the small island of Montserrat. In all probability it had existed some years previous to his arrival; in fact, were it not my intention to steer clear of oftensive technicalities, I should feel inclined to advance the theory of a painfully scientific friend of mine, who assures me that it is of post-pliocene

date. He has arrived at this weighty decision by scooping things from the bed of the ocean, and by prodding the sand for prehistoric animalculæ, not living but left behind. So it is worth knowing, especially when one has grasped the insidious pronunciation of the term. Noticing the resemblance the island bears to the rugged, time-split peak of Monte Serrado or Montserrat, which lies to the extreme north of Spain, Columbus handed it to posterity graced with a similar title. It was in a

monastery on the Spanish Montserrat, by the way, where Loyola planned the celebrated Society of Jesus.

But it is not to this Montserrat of the past that my thoughts are wandering. It is rather to the Montserrat of to-day : the tiny, spangled island which rises erect from the blueness of the tropical ocean, and rears its cloud-capped head to the heavens above. The island of health and beauty ; of fertile savannah and scent-laden breeze. Above all, the island of the Limes.

It may be stated, without fear of contradiction, that Montserrat stands unique throughout the entire group of the Western Indies—surely a proud position for an urchin of its size to occupy. For twenty Montserrats might easily be formed from one Jamaica, even leaving material to spare for an odd St. Kitts or

two. But, whereas Jamaica devotes herself almost exclusively to sugar-growing, the staple industry of the numerous islands which range in a chain from Guadaloupe to the east coast of Florida, Montserrat alone has shaken off the shackles of tradition by applying herself to the higher cultivation of Limes. And hence the prosperity which has been hers during the past quarter of a century or so, when her neighbours, handicapped by the decline in the demand for sugar-cane, have drifted into a condition of lethargic decadence.

What a vision of glorious, unsullied beauty is presented to my view as I lean from the bow of my vessel to scan the dainty island which lies green and shimmering across the waters. The tangled slopes of thicket and fern ; the



CABBAGE PALMS AND TROPICAL UNDERGROWTH

From a Photo lent by Messrs. EVANS, SONS & CO., Liverpool

blossomed lime-orchards which sweep well-nigh to the water's edge ; the little white villas peeping from their screen of forest, with a cluster of cabbage-palms waving by the very windows. As the slopes rise higher and steeper, they seem to cast aside their garb of brilliant emerald for one of more sober hue, afraid, perchance, that they will but soil their magnificence, as they embrace the volcanic mountain tops and pierce the cap of clouds which hovers eternally about their summit. What in all the world can rival the azure of the arching sky, save, perhaps, the waters themselves, as they tumble in flakes of foam over the circuitous bar, and rush with merry ripple to kiss the dimpled line of beach. Surely this must be some island from the realm of a poet's Arcadia, an island of dream and siesta ; of dark-skinned maids with laughing, roguish lips, and eyes as the noontide sun upon some mountain pool.

Indulging in reveries such as this, I had almost failed to notice the flotilla of small boats, which had leapt the murmuring bar, and were racing in frantic haste to reach our vessel. I was speedily awakened to a more material world, however, by a rich, pure brogue which assured me that its owner's boat was the most seaworthy in the whole of the Antilles, and would carry my honorable luggage without the least possibility of mishap. I started at the sound, almost fearing that my imagination had played me false, and that, in reality, I was lying outside the harbour of dear, dirty Dublin. I looked down to behold a grinning negro face, with teeth white and flashing, and a hulking tub such as one may hail by the score at Wapping Stairs. Then several more boats floundered round, each a degree worse than its fellow, and again that torrent of quasi-Irish brogue. The explanation of this phenomenal negro accent lies in the fact that the early English settlers in Montserrat were Irish (if the bull be permitted), and their characteristic speech has been handed down unwatered to the blacks. Tradition tells of a worthy son of Donegal who paid a visit to the island, and was accosted in the same manner as I. "Faith!" he exclaimed, "an' how

long have ye been here, me bhoy?" "Three months, yer honour," returned the grinning negro. "Phwat?" cried the Irishman, "only three months, an' so black as that already? Thin, be jabbers, this climate is no place for me," and the next day he returned to New York from whence he came.

Plymouth, the chief town of the island, is quite of the ordinary West Indian type, except, perhaps, that its houses are slightly better built than the generality of their kind. Viewed from the water, it presents a strikingly beautiful appearance. Its white villas, dotted here and there without the slightest attempt at symmetry, are interspersed with clusters of graceful palm trees ; its banks of lycopodium vary the brilliant emerald of the grass and the waving delicacy of the maiden-hair fern. From the terraced housetops, thin streams of smoke curl unquivering to the sky above, and to the rear, the radiant hillside is white with lime plantations, or shadowed with miniature jungle and impenetrable undergrowth.

My hotel, where I was welcomed by a mulatto of exceedingly fine physique, reminded me irresistibly of modern Spain, in the fact that one could rely upon meals being served from an hour to an hour and a-half later than the actual specified time. The sleepiness of the entire household was simply appalling, and it was not until evening that things began to waken up to any appreciable extent. At that hour of the day, Plymouth is at its best, for then the streets are gay with a throng of chattering negroes, arrayed in motley, picturesque garb and ever-smiling countenance. The impression that a visitor invariably carries away from Montserrat, is that the negro race is the happiest and best-tempered beneath the sun. He sees but a branch of it, however, and that under the most favourable aspect possible. He has probably never come into antagonistic contact with a seething negro mob, half mad with inferior spirit and filled with the lust of innate savagery—which is just as well for him, perhaps.

The few English who reside in the island are hospitable to a degree. Again and again, I was invited to take

up my quarters at various ideal houses, though, as my visit was none too lengthy and my instincts to court solitude among the scenery which had so entranced me, I preferred my inconvenient hotel with its consequent discomforts.

The principal street in Plymouth, wide and fairly-well paved, is designed after the fashion of a European

and flounces innumerable. Stilted in file between a couple of parallel poles, upon which rests a cask of lime-juice, a pair of donkeys amble moodily towards the stage ; and strolling a few yards in their rear, the muleteer gives voice to some murmuring, old-day dirge, as his dreamy eyes roll vacantly from side to side, and his ungainly arms



A MOUNTAIN RESIDENCE

From a Photo lent by Messrs. EVANS, SONS & CO., Liverpool

esplanade. The houses and stores, each with their overhanging awnings, are of a greyish stone, their most noticeable ornaments being embodied in the leaf-hatted mulattos, who lounge idly by the walls to chew and spit after the manner of their kind. Mule carriages jog amiably along the road, driven, perhaps, by a coloured coachman of champing jaw, and containing an immense negro lady arrayed in a balloon-like gown of striped cotton, with frills

droop heavily by his hips. Along the pathway swaggers an Englishman, his hands in the pockets of his duck trousers, a pipe of disreputable exterior protruding offensively from the corner of his clean-shaven lips. The creole in the ice store shoots a languid glance in his direction, but the white man shakes his head, and plods sturdily up the hill-side to the white stone club where his countrymen do mostly congregate. No one is in a hurry ; it is *infra dig.* to



A GROUP OF WEST INDIAN NATIVES

From a Photo sent by Messrs. EVANS, Sons & Co., Liverpool.

hurry in the West Indies, besides being inconvenient and quite unnecessary.

It was one of those ideal mornings of which we in England are sometimes permitted the faintest conception in early June, when I left my hotel to scour the island, unhampered by guides, and neither seeking nor desiring other companionship than Nature in her sweetest and most gracious mood. The high road, which trails serpent-like

across the island towards Ker's Bay at the north, took me for some two or three miles through the heart of the lime-orchards, at this period of the year robed in a mantle of delicate blossom. The lime-blossom resembles that of its sister orange to a very considerable degree, though it is, if anything, more charmingly scented. A peculiarity of the tree lies in the fragrant odour of its leaves, and I am told, though for my

own part, personal observation is mute on the subject, that these are extensively used throughout the West Indies for the purpose of scenting the water in the finger glasses. As I strolled along, discarding my pipe as the barbarous invention of degraded man, I caught sight, through the halo of blossom, of a number of sturdy negresses pruning the trees and freeing them from the insidious mistletoe, which, if permitted to spread according to its own sweet will, creeps like some hideous vampire in every direction, and drains the very life from the heart of the wood.

The lime itself is a round, green fruit of peculiar, pungent taste, three crops being obtainable per year. The rind is thick and tough, and prior to its removal from the fruit, is eseculed by negresses for the purpose of extracting the powerful essential oil it contains. The process simply consists of rubbing the lime beneath the palm of the hand in a spiked basin.

A regular army of negresses are employed to gather the ripe fruit. Huge baskets are requisitioned to carry it to the warehouse, and these the women balance on their flat-topped heads, with a dexterity born of long and continued practice. Apart from dancing, perhaps, there is nothing the negro so thoroughly enjoys as carrying a weighty article on his cranium. It is solemnly affirmed that when modern building operations were primarily conducted in Montserrat, and wheelbarrows were introduced for the easy transport of earth and stones, it was one of the features of the island to behold a perspiring negro staggering up the hillside, with a loaded barrow on his head and a smile of ineffable happiness illuminating his ebony countenance.

The cultivation of Limes in Montserrat was primarily due to the enterprise displayed by Sturges' Montserrat Company, though the plantations have since passed into other hands. The juice, which is



NEGRESSES SCRUBBING THE LIMES

From a Photo sent by Messrs. EVANS, SONS & Co., Liverpool



A METHOD OF MOUNTAIN TRANSPORT
From a Photo sent to Messrs. Evans, Sons & Co., Liverpool.

thoroughly extracted by means of hydraulic pressure, is shipped in puncheons to one English firm only, when it is clarified and otherwise rendered fit for consumption. There are certainly other islands in the West Indies where limes may be found, but these in a wild condition only. Enterprising natives prowl through the thickets and bracken, armed with an unclean bucket and a wooden lemon-squeezer, and any lime bush which happens to fall within their path is promptly denuded of its fruit, the juice finding its way into the bucket. Unfortunately, however, the genus *nigro* is not a gentleman possessed of irreproachable morals, and if he does not consider that the cash value of his day's labour will supply him with sufficient bad brandy to enable him to forget what a hard world it is for niggers, his ingenuity and a pint or two of sea-water supply the deficit.

Leaving the orchards and the high-road in my rear, I scaled a steep bank of wild, luxuriant undergrowth, and set off in an oblique direction towards glorious St. George's Hill, which rises to a height of three thousand feet above the sea level. Above me, reared a swaying forest of glistening foliage; down below the curving hill swept gently to the sea, with the little sleepy town nestling at its base like a weary child who creeps to the refuge of its mother's arms. Away over the water, hung the purple peak of Guadalupe; the azure ocean was dotted with flecks of white, which closer inspection proved to be the sails of the diminutive vessels which loitered idly around the coast. I turned to my path again; just a ragged-edged footway coiling between the silver fern and the sturdy banana bush. Myriads of insects danced in the air; up and down in rhythmical fashion like the eternal swaying of a pendulum. Now and again, a gorgeous butterfly sailed disdainfully above me. The trees sang whispering love-stories to the perfumed zephyr which coquetted with their emerald leaves.

As I ascended the heights, the aspect grew less dainty. I had left the maiden-hair fern right away below me. The soil was coarser and more clodden.

I passed into the shadow of a well-nigh impenetrable jungle. Fetid pools of water glinted at my feet, and rippled in stagnant circles as a twig fell lightly from the branches overhead. I passed beyond, to find the rock protruding in uncovered peaks from the wire-like grass. Cliffs stood perpendicular to the sky, split in their centre as with the battle-axe of a warrior. Down the hillside ran a fluted cañon, its depth curtained in impenetrable blackness. I skirted the cañon to pass beneath a huge gateway of natural, tufted rock, and again a scene of glorious splendour lay before me. Away to the north, the great pinnacle of Nevis sharpened to its floating cloud. Right beneath my feet, a wooded slope curved into a dell whose sides were formed by three charmingly clad hills. The gorgeous hibiscus smiled in luxuriant beauty; tropical magnificence reigned supreme once more. Such is the vale of the Soufrière; the natural sulphur mine whose existence is due to long extinct volcanoes. As I descended, the very earth grew warm beneath my feet, and a faint cloud of vapour rose to the breeze to be carried away and suffused in the fragrance beyond.

The heat of the day had already become intense, so I sought an alcove of sweet scented lime-trees, and, shame to say, produced a flask which has grown battered in long and honorable service. A mosquito dancing merrily along, sighted me as his legitimate prey. But I had anticipated the probable attentions of gentry of his blood-thirsty disposition, and encased my head in an armour of gauze, with thin cane ribs which protrude like the sides of a gorged balloon. An inviting bank of lycopodium lured me to repose; but, alas, as I prodded it with my stick, an army of rapacious ants rushed frantically away over mound and hummock to carry the news of another village devastated by exploiting man.

By-and-bye, I reach a white stone cottage perched perilously near to a miniature precipice, and, of course, seek hospitality. I am welcomed by a young negress of erratic speech and conducted to the living room, where a bright-eyed baby of coppered complexion chuckles gleefully at his own humorous thoughts,

and waves his little fist impartially between his mouth and the smoke grimed ceiling. A feast of fruit is placed before me—bananas, water melons, a pine of succulent aspect. From the deepness of a mountain well is drawn a bucket of clear sparkling water—primitive fare but enjoyable. My eyes wander round the room as my hostess chats incessantly. "Massa," I gather, is an overseer on the cocoa plantation, one of the newer industries of the island. I advance no questions as to the nationality of "massa;" but I notice a few "Graphic" pictures glued to the wall, a pile of books on a rickety shelf by the window. And as I make my adieux, I leave a silver coin in the fist of the astounded infant.

But beautiful as the island may be when the sun is new in the heavens, it is none the less so as the beams grow

golden, as a shaft of fire shoots crimson across the western sky; when the humming birds dart by the mountain pool, and quiver from shade to sunlight and back to shadow again; when the leaves are stained with a darker hue; when the glories of the hillside fade into mystery and are blotted into the nothingness around. The distant waters seem tinged with crested purple. Guadaloupe is but a bank of mist upon the horizon. In Plymouth beneath, lights spring to the darkness.

So, at the close of the day of which I speak, I found my way to the high road again. A man in a buggy, who overtook me, offered me a lift. He was an Englishman and our conversation drifted to horse-racing. With the evening breeze, the scent of the lime blossom was wafted deliciously around us. And soon I was in Plymouth again.



A TYPICAL VIEW OF THE INTERIOR OF THE ISLAND. ST. GEORGE'S HILL IN THE DISTANCE.

From a Photo lent by Messrs. EVANS, SONS & CO., Liverpool.



A TALE OF THE AMAXOSA

WRITTEN BY M. ESTCOURT AND FRANK VERNON

ILLUSTRATED BY M. NISBET

WA-LO-O! Wa-lo-o!" The cry rang out into the summer night, and was answered by a hundred echoes from the rocks and hills. The fire, leaping up into a red blaze, cast a lurid glare on the fantastic forms of a band of warriors dancing and shrieking around it. Beyond lay the Kraal with its huts rising like dark shadows in the gloom. It was the war dance of the Amaxosa. The excitement grew fiercer every moment; hideous yells and war whoops filled the night air, with a jingling accompaniment of beads and crashing of shields.

Again it rang out, "Wa-lo-o, Wa-lo-o," and a shower of assegais whizzed through the air into the darkness.

At last the dance was over, and the warriors, breathless and exhausted, flung themselves down in various attitudes round the fire.

"Why does the King not dance tonight?" asked one of the young Indunas in a low whisper.

"The King has the sickness, and the White Face attends him," came the answer, and the warriors were silent.

If they had looked beyond the ring of the fire, they might have seen in the shadow two dark forms who had stood together all through the mad revel, so still that they might

have been carved in wood. Not a word passed between them, not a sign was made until the end of the dance ; then one lifted his hand, and still silently they glided towards the King's hut and entered.

The silence remained unbroken, and the old Chief paced restlessly to and fro with his hands clasped behind him, his head bent forward on his chest. Now and then he shivered violently, as if some terrible fever or ague were upon him, and in his restless walk he paused at the door and looked out.

They were a strange contrast, these two, in the dim firelight of the hut ; the wavering, restless old savage, with his bent form and worn anxious face, and the quiet strength in the alert, upright figure of the other. Browned from long exposure, his face was almost as dark as that of the Chief, but he was one of the hated White Face People, and White Face he would always be to the tribe.

He stood now leaning against the mud wall, his keen, grey eyes fixed steadily upon the King, watching his every movement. At last he spoke.

"The King is in trouble to-night and tells not the White Face. Listen, Great Father ! Have I not been your faithful friend for all the long years since you saved my life, when your warriors found me in the bush and would have slain me ? For those years I have seen no other White Face, and heard no voice of my own people ; and though I am the King's friend and adviser, I am watched too closely to escape. If I did, who would show me the secret way out of this bush ?

"Yesterday the King's life was in my hands, and I might have fled away into the bush ; but the King is my friend, and I could not kill. When the King's body is ill I cure it ; now the King's mind is ill let me know and help."

The King silently put out his hand to the White Face and looked long and earnestly at him ; then he moved cautiously to the door and listened, the White Face watching him closely. At last he returned, and, laying his hand on the other's shoulder, he said,

"The burden of the Spirits is heavy my son, but their will must be obeyed.

'Mlangeni brings the message to-night.'

"Ah, if the King would but leave the counsels of the Witch Doctor ! They are evil and will bring sorrow and ruin—"

"Hush ! Do not call up the anger of the Spirits. Leave me now, my son, perhaps, I may want you again before the morning. Remember, whatever happens you are safe."

The White face slowly left the hut, and with his head bent in meditation, walked softly in the direction of his own.

Suddenly he felt a light touch on his arm, and turning hastily he found 'Milo, the King's daughter, beside him. This was the first time during his captivity that she had made any attempt to speak to him alone, and he looked at her with surprise.

She put her fingers on her lips and whispered, "If the White Face needs help, strike three times on the shield which hangs at the door of my hut." Then, glancing anxiously over her shoulder, she glided away and he was alone again.

He stood still, wondering what it all meant. Why had there been a war dance to-night, and why had the King kept him by his side all the evening ?

The Kraal now was wrapped in so deep a silence that the cries of the distant night birds seemed to come from another world. The Milky Way, with its myriads of shining stars, shed a soft, unearthly light over the sleeping world, and made the black shadows everywhere more intense. Just above the line of dark hill the Southern Cross glittered like a solitary sentinel in the deep blue of the sky, and over all, the air of the summer night, laden with the scent of aloes and mimosas, breathed a soft lullaby.

There was no sleep for the White Face, and he sat in the doorway of his hut trying to account for the agitation of the old Chief. It was not the sickness as the young Induna thought ; that could have been cured by herbs. Could the old man be losing his reason, or was it after all another of those devilish tricks of the Witch Doctor.

"There is knavery in it somewhere,"

he said to himself, "and I must find it out."

Starting up, he crept cautiously back along the shadow behind the Kraal to the Chief's hut, and looked through a small opening in the wall at the back.

The Chief glanced up furtively and listened, then rose and went to the door.

It was just midnight, and the quiet of the outer Kraal contrasted strangely with the unrest in the great hut. He stood for some time looking on the peaceful scene, then with a deep sigh of despair he drew his blanket about him and sat with his eyes fixed on the entrance.

The fire was still smouldering and the dying flames, which at intervals burst into a blaze, made the shadows dance on the war shields and deadly assegais that hung from the dark mud walls and thatched roof of the hut.

Suddenly he lifted his head and listened; none but a Kaffir could have heard that soft, stealthy tread upon the grass outside. A moment later a tall gaunt form, looking almost spectral in the dim light, appeared in the doorway.

The figure was that of an old man, whose height was apparently increased by his emaciated appearance. A long blanket hung in loose folds from his shoulders, and round his bony neck he wore a charm, the teeth necklace of the Witches. His piercing black eyes moved restlessly, until they lighted on the bowed figure by the fire, then he went slowly forward into the hut.

The old Chief made no sign and the Wizard stood before him, leaning on the long kerrie which he held in his hand. At last in a low voice he addressed the Chief.

"Is the King and my Father ready?"

The old man bent his head in reply, and the Wizard continued.

"Hear then what the Spirits say of the White Face people."

He waved his staff slowly through the air, muttering an incantation in a deep, droning voice. Just then the fire, bursting into a feeble effort to live again, died out and the two men were left in darkness, the Chief with his hands still clasped about his head, the other with his arms spread out and his staff raised in the air.

Slowly a yellow light appeared and was accompanied by a sound as if the wind had risen and was moaning and whistling through the trees. The Wizard still muttering the incantation, bent before the light till his forehead touched the ground, then he put his ear to the earth and listened.

There was a long pause, and it seemed as if a spell had been cast everywhere, so still had it grown. The White Face, fearful of betraying his presence, held his breath, but his eyes were fixed in a fascinated gaze on the prostrate figure of the mysterious visitor. As he watched, the Wizard once more put his forehead to the ground in salute, then rose and, with his arms folded, addressed the King.

"Now shall the King, my Father, know the message of the Spirits. Hear, understand and obey!"

"Sacrifice shalt thou make of all cattle and crops. Let no seed fall to the ground, and the tribe of the Amaxosa shall flourish. The blood of slain warriors cries from the earth for vengeance, and when the next moon wanes the White Face People shall be driven into the sea.

"Is not the will of the Spirits our will, O my Father, and shall we not hear? Rise up and slay! The land of the White Face shall be ours. Now rest, O King! At the waning of the moon we shall meet again."

Once more it was dark, and the Chief was alone. A cry of pain broke from him that seemed to rend his very soul, and, throwing himself to the ground, he sobbed aloud.

The White Face stood for a moment reflecting on the terrible results which would follow if the Wizard's spell worked and the Spirits were obeyed. He knew his own intercession for the innocent would be of no avail with the King, whose religion it was to obey the commands of the Spirits; yet something must be done to avert the impending catastrophe and prevent the useless sacrifice of hundreds of human lives.

Involuntarily his eyes turned to the dim outline of the huts where the sleeping warriors lay, and then his gaze fell to a hut not far from the King's, within a small enclosure.

Suddenly he remembered his meeting with 'Mlilo the night before, and her mysterious words, then, turning hurriedly, he walked across to the hut of the Princess and gently knocked three times on a shield that hung over the doorway.

The leopard skin was quickly drawn aside, as if someone had been waiting for the signal, and a woman peered out cautiously and looked at him for a moment.

"Wait," she whispered, and disappeared.

A second later the skin was again listed, and 'Mlilo stood in the entrance.

In the wonderful starlight she looked like a stately and beautiful queen.

"How well her name suits her," he thought.

"'Mlilo,'" the soft Kaffir word for fire.

As the skin dropped behind her, she advanced a few steps and threw herself at his feet.

Taken by surprise, he drew back hastily, but she knelt on, and, clasping her hands, looked up at him with her beautiful eyes ablaze.

"The White Face knows now the meaning of our ancient custom, that a maiden, in offering her help to a man, offers all she has to give, and next to the Spirits she shall obey him before all others. You have knocked upon my shield. 'Mlilo, the daughter of a hundred Kings asks to be commanded by her Lord," and again she bent her head.

In a moment the situation dawned upon him, and all chance of escape now seemed more hopeless than ever. It would be easier to elude an army of warriors than the love watch of this savage woman.

Through all his captivity he had avoided the women of the Amaxosa, partly, perhaps, because the memory of a pair of blue eyes in the old country still haunted him; anyhow, it had not required much strength of will to remain without a wife. But this "daughter of a hundred Kings" was somehow different from the others; her features were straight and regular, and her great dark eyes were more like those of a startled fawn than of a human being.

His only chance, he knew, lay in this moment while she was excited, and he

began, "Listen; 'Mlilo, the King's daughter is mistaken"—With a smothered cry she sprang to her feet, and drew from her girdle a short knife which she raised in the air.

The White Face did not move, but kept his eyes steadily fixed on her face. For a moment she wavered, then, gently laying the weapon in his hand, she again fell on her knees and wailed out,

"Command!"

"'Mlilo," he said, taking her hands and raising her, "I am going to ask you to disobey the Spirits."

She drew back shrinking from him and covered her face with one hand, while the White Face kept her other firmly in his own.

"What is it?" she murmured at last in a frightened whisper.

He told her quickly of all that had passed, and prayed, for the sake of her own tribe, for the hundreds of innocent lives, that she would intercede with her father.

"'Mlilo, the White Face People will not suffer, you know that; your own people instead will die, and their blood will be upon the King's head. Save them and him."

She was trembling now, and said, with a quiver in her voice,

"The White Face knows not the anger of the Spirits."

"Will you not trust me?" he said, quickly. She slowly faced him and fixed her eyes upon him with a look of mingled love and sorrow. She knew the cost of her intercession, but this savage woman had a great soul, and she said quietly, "Because I love you, I will go."

The White Face took both her hands and raised them reverently to his lips, then she turned and walked steadily towards the great hut.

The dawn was now stealing like a pale and silent phantom over the sleeping earth. There was a twittering of birds and a gentle rustle in the leaves, as if nature was making a last reluctant effort to awaken.

In the grey light the old Chief stood at the door of his hut, his arms stretched out towards the hills, as if in appeal for help from some unknown source.

"At the waning of the moon," he murmured to himself, "we shall meet again. Aye, we shall meet again. The White Face People must die."

"No," said a quiet voice, "your own people will die."

The King turned abruptly to find his daughter, his best beloved, standing beside him.

"Little Father," she went on, in a low, steady voice, "you have heard the voice of the Evil Spirits. If you make this sacrifice, the White Face People will conquer and not die."

The White Face had followed the girl at a discreet distance, and now stood back in the shadow of the hut.

Suddenly he realised that he too had been followed, and prepared to be on his guard.

It was too late, and a well-delivered blow on the back of his head sent him reeling to the ground, unconscious of what was going on around him.

* * * *

The sun was casting his last rays upon the Kraal when the White Face came to himself. He was lying on a skin in a strange hut, and a young Kaffir was bathing his head.

He started up as he heard a strange, confused lowing of cattle and bleating of sheep; and then through the doorway he saw a fierce, red glow which rose and fell and quivered as it mingled with the light of the dying sun.

"Nkolombe, what does that light mean?" he said, hardly daring to hear the answer.

"Sacrifice to the Spirits," the young man replied, with a sorrowful shake of his head. And the two men looked at each other in silence.

For days the sacrifice continued. Then the tribe of the Amaxosa sat still, and waited for the waning of the moon.

But the moon waned, and the Spirits forgot the Amaxosa. Hunger came to the tribe, strong men grew weak, and death, with outspread wings, hovered over the black and ruined country. The old Chief's hair grew white, and his face worn and thin, but only the Wizard knew why his heart was heavy and his step so slow.

One evening he walked with bowed

head and painful steps to the Wizard's hut, which stood alone outside the Kraal, at the entrance to a deep ravine.

The Wizard advanced to meet the King, but greeted him sternly.

"Will the great Father still sacrifice his people to the anger of the Spirits, when they wait to be appeased?"

"Is there no other way?" the King asked, in a voice trembling with emotion.

"The Spirits will have nothing else."

"Then they must be obeyed in this too. But I cannot see it done. The word of a King was given, and the Spirits have robbed me of that. See to it."

"A brave heart, great Father. To-morrow at dawn it shall be."

The King turned sorrowfully back towards the Kraal, and from behind the Wizard's hut a dark form crept quickly into the deep shadow of the ravine.

* * * *

That night the White Face was sleeping the sleep of exhaustion, and neither the shaking of the rush-mat at the door nor the gentle touch on his arm roused him.

"Awake, awake!" whispered a soft voice in his ear.

The White Face sat up and looked about him wearily, until his eyes rested on the figure beside him.

"Mlilo," he exclaimed, "what has happened? What are you doing here?"

"Hush!" she said quickly. "You must fly at once. Mlangeni says the Spirits are angry because the White Face lives, and the King cannot save you now. You are to die at dawn if they find you here."

"Ah! Mlilo, you are good to me. But I am too weak to walk long miles, and my head is very weary."

"The Beloved forgets that Mlilo loves. I knew what that old Evil one would do many days ago, and we have hidden horses and food in the old cave by the hill."

"We?"

"Ah! Nkolombe loves you too. You have taught my brother the language of your White Face People. He knows

the way through the bush, and he will go with you to the White Face Country. Ah! you will be kind to him." Her voice shook. "But come," she said, rousing herself; "we have not a moment to lose. You must be far in the bush before the warriors are awake."

she forced a way through the under-growth, and soon led the White Face to a narrow track so indistinct that only a Kaffir would have found it.

They hurried on for about three miles, the White Face breathing hard in the effort to keep up with the quick swinging walk of the girl before him.



"GOOD-BYE, PRINCESS OF THE WHITE SOUL."

She took his hand and led him out, carefully picking her way over the blackened ground till they were out of sight of the Kraal.

"Quick, now," said the girl; "follow me." And, plunging into the bush,

Now and then she turned round in her walk and touched his arm gently, looking anxiously into his face with her great, tender eyes.

"You are weary, Beloved, but it will not be long."

Suddenly they emerged upon a strip of open country. Crossing this rapidly, 'Mlilo led the way to a dark kloof on the opposite side, and, pushing aside the branches of a tree, pointed to an opening in the rocks.

They entered, and soon reached a large chamber, where 'Nkolombe was busily engaged in stirring the contents of a pot over the fire. In the other corner two rough ponies stood ready, each loaded with a small sack of corn and a skin.

After a hurried meal of corn and wild buck, they led the ponies out of the cave, and prepared to depart.

'Mlilo stood silently by till all was ready. Then the White Face turned, and took her hands.

"You have saved my life, 'Mlilo, and given me hope and liberty again. How can I thank you?"

"I love you," she said simply.

"In a few days I will return to you with help for your people, so we shall meet again," he said cheerfully.

She looked at him quickly, then turned her head away, and said sadly, "We must say 'Good-bye' now. I must not be found missing, and you must hasten. Good-bye." She held out her hands to him.

For a moment he looked into her eyes. Then, dropping on his knee, he raised both hands to his lips, and kissed them twice.

"Good-bye, Princess of the White Soul."

"Go," she said hoarsely.

He rose, and, with another clasp of her hands, mounted his pony, and the two men were soon hidden in the dense bush.

The girl stood where they had left her, gazing straight before her into the bush, until suddenly she seemed to realise that she was alone.

"Come back, come back," she cried. But there was no answer, only the sighing of the wind in the thick bushes.

"Why did I let you go?" she went on fiercely, her eyes dilating with passion. "Why should I help you to leave me, to go back to your White Face people and forget me?"

She moved forward a few steps. "Ah! you may return, but you will

not find 'Mlilo. And what will you care?" She paused, and the fire died out of her eyes, leaving them like those of a wild dove.

"Princess of the White Soul," she murmured softly to herself, sinking on her knees with her hands clasped before her. "Ah! no, I love him too well. One must die, but not he, not he. And he will never know. Good-bye, good-bye."

She rose, and, glancing wistfully towards the spot where the men had entered the bush, she slowly retraced her steps to the Kraal, and entered her hut just as the first pale streak of light began to show in the east.

* * * *

After they left the cave, the men rode quickly on, and, guided by the quick eyes of the young Kaffir, they reached, a few hours later, a beaten track through the forest.

For three days and nights they continued their weary ride, passing through the blackened cornfields of the stricken tribe, snatching a few hours' sleep in the heat of the day, living upon roots and such wild game as could be killed by assegais.

At the end of the third day, as the moon rose over the dark blue range of distant mountains, a sudden bend in the road showed them the lights of Fort Albany glittering a welcome.

The Englishman's heart gave a great bound. At last, after five years, he was free, and near his own people again.

He whipped his horse to a gallop, and, hardly noticing whether his companion followed or not, he rode down the narrow street and asked his way to the house of the commissioner.

The house was soon reached, and, flinging the reins to 'Nkolombe, who had caught up with him, he sprang from his horse and hurried up the steps to the stoep where three men sat smoking.

At the top of the steps he paused, and, the moonlight shining down upon his face, showed it white and haggard.

"Gentlemen," he began, nervously, "my name is——"

"Good God," cried one of the men, "it's Jack Warneford," and springing up, he was just in time to catch him as he staggered to the wall.

"Poor chap," said the commissioner, lifting him in his arms and carrying him into the house.

"That White Face," said 'Nkolombe, who had followed close behind, "no eat two days."

"Two days," remarked the commissioner drily, "looks like five years."

Warneford soon revived and was able to tell his story which he did fully, only suppressing the details of 'Mlilo's love for him.

"It's a wonderful story, Jack," said the commissioner.

"We had all at last reluctantly given you up for lost. For months we scoured the country for miles round, but there was no trace of anything to throw light on your disappearance. The whole thing remained a mystery."

* * * *

At daybreak next morning an armed expedition set out to the relief of the

Amaxosa, and, notwithstanding his weak and exhausted condition, nothing would deter Warneford from joining it. His promise to 'Mlilo, his anxiety for the old king's safety, and fear what the Wizard might still do, were all strong reasons in his mind for being one of the party himself, and he and 'Nkolombe acted as guides.

The march was rapid, and one evening as the pale stars crept out and the veldt was bathed in soft light, they rode up the last hill which separated them from the Amaxosa.

Warneford and 'Nkolombe led the way, and as they reached the top they saw in the valley below a small red light, which rapidly grew to a bright glare behind the trees. They pressed on, 'Nkolombe almost flying in his excitement.

"What is it, 'Nkolombe?" whispered Warneford in a strange voice.



"ROUND TO A STAKE IN THE BURNING PILE, WAS 'MLILO'"

'Nkolombe made no reply, but gazed intently through the trees at the fire.

Just then a fearful shriek rent the air followed by a series of feeble yells and mad laughter.

"Merciful heaven!" cried Warneford as he dashed past 'Nkolombe and rode like a madman into the clearing, the men following hard after him.

The sight which met his gaze was one he never forgot.

In the middle of the clearing was a faggot pile, burning fiercely. Behind it a group of warriors stood looking on in grim silence, while the Wizard twisted and danced in circles, filling the air with weird and fiendish laughter, and now and then bending his body towards the fire in a mock salute. Bound to a stake in the burning pile was 'Mlilo, her hands clasped above her head, her beautiful eyes wide open with pain and

horror, and the flames curling up nearer and nearer to her face.

Suddenly the report of a pistol rang out sharp and clear on the still air, and the Wizard's dance was over for ever.

A feeble cry of recognition burst from 'Mlilo and she held out her burnt hands in welcome as Warneford rode into sight.

"Princess of the White Soul," she murmured faintly, then her eyes closed, her head dropped on her breast, and she fell forward, a charred heap in the flames.

Warneford saw it all. 'Mlilo's wonderful love and great sacrifice, and the meaning of mysterious words she had used, came to him now as he realised what his liberty had cost. The thought was too horrible, the reins dropped from his nerveless fingers, and slipping from his horse, he sank fainting to the ground.



Press Photo by C. Henwood

What our Great-Grandfathers Read:

THE CHAP-BOOKS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

ILLUSTRATED BY OLD ENGRAVINGS



Nthese days of cheap literature, when for a few pence we can become possessed of one of the modern magazines, rich in illustrations of the first order and printed upon excellent paper, it is interesting to glance back at the mental pabulum that was served out to our forefathers little more than a century ago.

Except in the towns, newspapers were rarities; and even there, they were only flimsy little sheets, containing a few items of war or foreign news. In the country, news was usually only obtainable by word of mouth, and the villagers of a literary turn of mind were left to regale themselves upon the Chap-books or Jest-books which the pedlars or chapmen carried in their packs from homestead to homestead and village to village.

Most of these Chap-books were published during the eighteenth century, and although they are now extremely rare, copies of almost all of them have fortunately been preserved in the British Museum. They are mostly little booklets of twenty-four pages, though many consist of only sixteen. The plates are invariably crude and rough, and in some of the later ones, the publishers became unscrupulous and used any woodblock without the slightest reference to the letterpress.

The Chapman, too, is now a thing of the past, although we still have his successor—the travelling hawker or tallyman—who finds his way into the little villages up and down the land.

The Chap-books were of a strangely divergent order—romantic, humorous, historical, religious, criminal—and meant to satisfy the tastes of the most fantastic. If variety is a criterion, satisfaction certainly ought to have

been obtained. But each of these classes seems to have had its votaries, and it is difficult to judge which was the most popular.

Among the Chap-books of the romantic order, "The History of Guy, Earl of Warwick," was in great demand. It is illustrated by ten engravings, and tells of Guy's love for "Phyllis the fair, whose beauty and virtue was inestimable, shining with such heavenly lustre that Guy's poor heart was ravished in adoration of this Heavenly Phyllis." She spurns him at first, but afterwards relents on condition that he wins glory by his bold achievements, and Guy "crosses the raging ocean and arrives at the Court of Thrace," where he defeats all the knights and princes, and wins, as a prize, the Emperor's daughter. Phyllis, to whom he now returns, is not satisfied with these deeds, so Guy departs once more, and now rescues a lion from a dragon, kills a furious boar, and commits various other marvellous deeds of prowess, and so at last induces the fair Phyllis to marry him. Guy now has qualms of conscience, and departs for the Holy Land, and after killing a giant or two, returns to England just in time to save his land from the Danes, and finally dies in the arms of Phyllis. It will be seen from this outline that there is considerable material for the story-teller.

Equally popular in this class of Chap-book were "The History of Valentine and Orson," "The History of the Life and Death of that Noble Knight, Sir Bevis of Southampton," and "The History of Thomas Hickathrift."

On the humorous side, the Chap-books had a very large range, but much of the humour is altogether too broad for our present day taste, or for repro-

duction here. Many of these booklets are, however, very dull reading, whilst the fun is often of the knockabout order only. One of the best is "The Merry Tales of the Wise Men of Gotham," consisting of twenty short tales and one plate. The incident which it illustrates is possibly well known to our readers, but as it is very short, we will give it in full.

"On a time the men of Gotham fain would have pinned in the Cuckow, that she might sing all the year; all in the midst of the town they had a hedge made round in compass, and got a a cuckow, and put her into it, and said, 'Sing here, and you shall lack neither meat nor drink all the year.' The cuckow when she perceived herself encompassed within the hedge, flew away. 'A vengeance on her,' said these Wise Men; 'we made not the hedge high enough.'

Tale No. 17 is a trifle more sly than the others in its termination. "There was a man of Gotham who would be married, and when the day of marriage was come, they went to church. The priest said, 'Do you say after me.' The priest said, 'Say not after me such words, but say what I shall tell you; thou dost play the fool to mock with the Holy Bible concerning matrimony.' Then the fellow said, 'Thou dost play the fool to mock with the Holy Bible concerning matrimony.' The priest could not tell what to say, but answered, 'What shall I do with this fool?' And the man said, 'What shall I do with this fool?' So the priest departed, and would not marry him. But he was instructed by others how to do and was afterwards married. And thus the breed of Gothamites has been perpetuated even unto this day."

"The Mad Pranks of Tom Tram, Son in Law to Mother Winter," is another very good specimen of this class of Chap-book. The hero was not only lazy, but one would imagine a fool and a knave combined. We are told that "though he was at man's estate, yet he would do nothing but what he pleased." One day his mother hears a proclamation that those who will not work shall be whipped, and she hastens home to tell Tom. "She was no sooner

gone, but Tom looked into a stone pot she used to keep her small beer in, and seeing the beer did not work, he, with his cartwhip, lays on the pot as hard as he could. The people seeing him, told his mother, who said, "The knave will be hanged," and in that note went home. Tom seeing her coming, laid on as hard as he could drive, and broke the pots, which made the old woman say, "Oh, what hast thou done, thou villain?" "O dear mother," said he, "you told me it was proclaimed, that those who did not work must be whipped; and I have so often seen our pots work so hard that they foamed at the mouth; but these two lazy knaves will never work. So I have whipped them to death to show their fellows to work, or never look me in the face again."

Another of Tom Tram's pranks is equally brilliant. "Mother Winter once sent him to buy a pennyworth of soap, and bade him be sure and bring her the change back safely; so he got two men with a hand barrow to carry the soap and hired four men to guard it, and gave them the elevenpence for their pains."

Amongst the many Chap-books of a humorous character, we naturally find one given up to "Joe Miller's Jests," whilst there are many books of riddles or "Whetstones for Dull Wits." The title-page is often the funniest part of the book, as for example the following:—

JOAKS UPON JOAKS.

OR

No Joak like a true Joak.

BEING THE

Diverting Humours of Mr. John Ogle
a Life-Guard Man.

THE

MERRY PRANKS OF LORD MOHUN AND
THE EARLS WARWICK AND
PEMBROKE
WITH

*Rochester's Dream, his Maiden Dis-
appointment and his Mountebanks Speech.*
TOGETHER WITH

The diverting Fancies and Frolics of
Charles 2 and his three Concubines.



ROBINSON CRUSOE. THE WRECK

The Chap-books dealt with historical personages, although not always with care to portray truthfully. There are "The History of the Royal Martyr, King Charles the First"; "The History of the Most Renowned Queen Elizabeth and her great Favourite, the Earl of Essex," and many others which call for no special notice. Most of the old stories and legends, such as "The Two Children in the Wood," "A True Tale of Robin Hood," "The History of Sir Richard Whittington," found a place, too, in the Chapman's basket. The illustrations are, as a rule, extremely quaint, and we reproduce two from "Robinson Crusoe," which, it must be acknowledged, do not show very great skill in the artist.

There does not appear to have been a very great demand for religious Chap-books, if we may judge by their com-

parative scarcity. One of them, however, "The History of Joseph and his Brethren, with Jacob's Journey into Egypt and his Death and Funeral," is well worth mention. It is told in rhymed couplets and illustrated with twelve cuts, four of which are here reproduced. But it can scarcely be called exhilarating reading, as may be judged by the following on Jacob's death and burial:—

Jacob now having finished his last stage,
And come to the end of earthly pilgrimage,
Was visited by his son Joseph, who
Brought with him Ephraim and Manasseh too.
When Jacob saw them, Who are these said he?
The sons, said Joseph, God has given me.
Then Jacob blessed them both, and his sons
did call

To shew to each what should to them befall,
Then giving orders unto Joseph where
He would be buried, left to him that care;
Then yielded up the ghost upon his bed,
And to his people he was gathered.

Ghosts and various superstitions con-



JOSEPH'S FIRST DREAM

nected with fortune-telling, moles, and dreams were largely drawn upon as the subjects of these little Chap-books. "The History of Mother Bunch of the West, containing many Rarities out of her Golden Closet of Curiosities," is chiefly taken up with receipts for girls who are desirous of obtaining husbands. Mother Bunch scarcely looks like a genius in the illustration, but her ideas certainly contain a large amount of ingenuity. Here is "a pretty way for a maid to know her sweetheart: Take a summer apple, of the best fruit, stick pins close into the apple, to the head, and as you stick them, take notice which of them is the middlemost, and give it what name you fancy; put it into thy left-hand glove, and lay it under thy pillow on Saturday night,



ARRIVAL OF SAVAGES WITH CHRISTIAN PRISONER



JOSEPH SOLD INTO EGYPT

after thou gettest into bed, then clap thy hands together, and say these words :—

If thou be he that must have me
To be thy wedded bride,
Make no delay, but come away
This night to my bedside.

And in thy sleep thou shalt see him
come in his shirt, and if he offer thee
any abuse, he will be great with another
woman ; but if he puts his hand over



JOSEPH'S BRETHREN COME INTO EGYPT TO BUY CORN

thee be not afraid, for it is a sign he'll prove a good husband." Mother Bunch makes many other suggestions of a similar character, and must have been a source of great trouble to the damsels who made her acquaintance.

Of the fortune-telling books it will be



JACOB'S DEATH AND BURIAL

sufficient to quote the title-page of one to give an idea of their contents.

A NEW FORTUNE BOOK

BEING A NEW ART OF COURTSHIP

Opened for young Men and Maids, Widows, Widowers and Batchelors, Instructions for young Men and Maids, how they may know their good or bad Fortune, shewing the signification of Moles, the Interpretation of Dreams, the famous Secret and New invented Art of making the true and false Love Powder ; to make the Enchanted Ring that will cause Love. Also how to cure a Drunken Husband or a Scolding Wife, secondly, how to cure the Ague, thirdly, how to cure the Toothache.

Here truly was value for the penny which the Chapman demanded for his goods.

There are quite a number of Chapbooks dealing with ghosts, "The Guildford Ghost," "The Portsmouth Ghost," "The Ghost of the Duke of Buckingham's Father," and a host of others. But one of the most popular of this class was "Bateman's Tragedy, or the Perjured Bride justly rewarded ; being the History of the Unfortunate Love of German's Wife and Young Bateman." The illustration, which we reproduce, gives the main outline of the story. It tells how young Bateman, riding through Clifton Town, accidentally espies fair Isabella, a rich farmer's daughter, standing at her father's door, and falls in love with her. Although she gives him every encouragement, her father refuses young Bateman's suit, and then one, German, attempts unsuccessfully to kill him. He makes his escape, however, and the fair Isabella comes to him in a neighbouring wood, where they seal their love by solemn vows. On the discovery of her escapade, she is confined to her chamber, where she is courted by German, whom she finally marries. But Bateman hangs himself by her door, and constantly fancying she sees him with a ghostly face, she grows melancholy, and is, in the end, carried away by a spirit.

The makers of these little books were not satisfied with mermaids and such-like strange creatures; they were prepared with far greater wonders. One of the Chap-books is called "The Miracle of Miracles," and it certainly has a marvellous illustration. The subtitle is extremely lengthy, for it is "A full and true Account of Sarah Smith, Daughter of John Symons, a Farmer, who lately was an inhabitant of Darken Parish in Essex, that was brought to Bed of a Strange Monster, the Body of it like a Fish with Scales thereon, it had no Legs but a pair of great Claws, Tallons like a Liands, it had Six Heads on its Neck, one was like the Face of a Man, with Eyes, Nose and Mouth to it, the second like the Face of a Cammel, and its Ears Cropt, two other Faces like Dragons, with spiked Tongues hanging out of their Mouths; another had an Eagles Head with a Beak instead of a Mouth at the end of it, and the last seeming to be a Calves Head," etc., etc. Also there is the funeral sermon of the woman who died, "with a Prayer before and after the said Sermon. It being very fit and necessary to be had in all Families for a Warning to Disobedient Children."

One last class of Chap-book remains to be touched on—that of the criminal order or nearly allied. Murder, robbery, immorality of every description is here fully dealt with. "The History of George Barnwell," of "John Gregg," of "Miss Davis," and a dozen others, are all fully furnished with the necessities for this morbid excitement. There are variations on these, such as "The Drunkard's Legacy," which we are told is "very proper to be read by all who are given to Drunkenness." The gentleman, however, does not inspire one as being an ideal boon companion. As may be imagined, none of this class make very edifying reading.

We have endeavoured to give some idea of these curious and interesting remains of a past age. These little Chap-books, once sold for a penny in the village, are now comparative rarities, and have fetched as much as 5s. on an average at sales in recent times. They have a character of their own, and to a certain extent they are an indication of the literary taste of England of the Eighteenth century. At least we can see what enormous advances have been made since their reign—advances by which we now benefit.



BATEMAN'S TRAGEDY



SPIGGIE HOTEL

The Delights of Dunrossness

WRITTEN BY C. J. H. CASSELS.

ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

YOU are in a wild, bleak-looking land, dotted with "touns" of thatched cottages, a land of peat-banks and crofts, "scat" grounds,* and woes, of headlands and holms. You are in the treeless country of a kindly, hospitable, and primitive people, where temperance and honesty hold sway, thieves do not break through and steal, and professional tramps are an unknown quantity; a country where, save in the capital, perhaps, doors are equally unlocked by night and by day, and where—let the fact be noted reverently—a stranger even yet is welcomed as much for his own sake as for the very moderate amount of payment he will require to leave behind him upon his departure. You are in a wilderness, moreover, where, if the elements are often forbidding, the sun yet frequently shines upon wonderfully fine coast and moorland scenery, and where, owing to the influence of the Gulf Stream, the climate is never a very trying one. To be brief, you are upon the "Old Rock," the

* Free grazing grounds.

Ultima Thule of the ancients—or otherwise, in Shetland. And when you have journeyed to Dunrossness you are in one of the most beautiful and thriving parts of the mainland.

Dunrossness, the most southerly parish in Shetland, is situated about twenty-two miles to the south of Lerwick, the capital of the country, and the same distance from Scalloway. It is one of the most interesting districts in the islands, for was it not here that Sir Walter Scott, when on tour with the Northern Lighthouse Service Commissioners, conceived his ideas for the construction of that romantic work called "The Pirate"?

From Spiggie Hotel, the only place of entertainment in the neighbourhood, you are within a walk of about four miles from Fitful Head, from which a magnificent view is to be obtained. This promontory has an almost sheer descent of 928 feet to the sea beneath, and from it, upon a suitable day, the distant and solitary islands called Fair Isle and Foula can be seen like mountains rising from the sea, looming in the distance. The former is about mid-

way between the Orkneys and the Shetlands. Although about twenty-five miles distant from the mainland of the last-named country, it is nevertheless in the parish of Dunrossness. Its population at the last census was 223, made up of thirty-four families. The resident schoolmaster holds services for the people every Sunday, and the parish minister visits them once a year, usually in the autumn. Hestaysa week or more, baptises the infants, marries the betrothed, and puts everything, so far as possible, in good going order for another year. The hosiery of fantastic patterns and many colours made on the Fair Isle is too well known to require a description here, beyond saying that the art of dyeing and knitting is supposed to have been taught the islanders by the survivors of a ship of the Spanish Armada, which was wrecked upon the coast in 1588.

The island of Foula, in the parish of Walls, is the boldest and grandest of the whole group. It contains about 239 inhabitants, and its highest point is 1,372 feet. One of its cliffs, called the Kame, is said to be the highest in the British Islands. It has a grand and terrible perpendicular declivity of 1,120 feet to the ocean below, and on its crags the exceedingly rare great skua, locally called the "bonxie," nests, this being the only place in the islands where this bird is to be found, excepting upon the coast in the north of Unst. It was across the slopes and over the crags of Fitful Head that Scott's famous witch Norna—the

Mother doubtful, mother dread,
Dweller on the Fitful Head

of "The Pirate"—was wont to wander, planning out future events for her relatives and acquaintances in the islands, and foretelling the state of the weather for the more humble and credulous fisher-folk. Here she made her rough and ready dwelling-place, and lived along with her eerie companions, the dumb dwarf, called Nicholas Strumper, and the tame seal, and here she was visited by her kinsman, the genial old Udaller, Magnus Troil, and his two pretty daughters, whom the poet Claud Halcro christened Night and Day, and

whom Sir Walter himself describes in the words of the Scots song, which says,—

Oh, Bessy Bell and Mary Gray,
They were two bonnie lasses;
They bigged a hoose on yon burn brae
And theekit it ower wi rashes.

Fair Bessy Bell I loved yestreen,
And thought I ne'er could alter;
But Mary Gray's twa pawky een
Have garr'd my fancy falter.

From the aforementioned hotel you are also at a distance of seven or eight miles from Sumburgh Head, the most southerly point of the Shetlands. On the summit is a famous lighthouse, the light from which is visible at a distance of twenty-one miles. At Jarlshof, now a mere ruin, near West Voe, on Sumburgh, "Mertoun," the misanthropist, otherwise known as "The Silent Man of Sumburgh," lived with his fearless cliff-climbing son Mordaunt, and on the wild and stormy coast there the latter effected his daring rescue of the pirate Cleveland.

To go somewhat further afield, at a distance of rather more than eight miles in a north-easterly direction from Spiggie is situated the Pictish tower of Mousa. It is built on the west side of the uninhabited island that gives it a name, and it is the most perfect specimen of its kind in Great Britain. In shape it is very similar to a dice-box, and it is surrounded by an outside wall six feet in thickness. It is said, however, to have undergone repairs at a comparatively recent period; and regarding its history, a note of Sir Walter Scott's in "The Pirate," taken from "Torfael Arcadus," says:

"Even this ancient pigeon-house, composed of dry stones, was fortification enough, not indeed to hold out a ten years' siege, like Troy, in similar circumstances, but to wear out the patience of the besiegers. Erland, the son of Harold the Fairsspoken, had carried off a beautiful woman, the mother of a Norwegian earl also called Harold, and sheltered himself along with his fair prize in the Castle of Mousa. Earl Harold followed with an army, and finding the place too strong for assault endeavoured to reduce it by famine,

but such was the length of the siege that the offended Earl found it necessary to listen to a treaty of accommodation, and agreed that his mother's honour should be restored by marriage. This transaction took place in the beginning of the thirteenth century, in the reign of William the Lion of Scotland." There is a ferry of about two miles to cross from Sand Lodge on the mainland to the island of Mousa.

Not to forget another interesting place, the old parish church of Saint Ninian's, or Ringan's, of which there are now no traces, was situated on the island of that name about three miles to the north-west of Spiggie. Part of the island at one time was used as a burial ground, but has for a long time been in desuetude. So sandy is the soil, and often so stormy the weather, that up to this day, after heavy gales of wind, human skulls and bones are sometimes laid bare, and picked up there. In Saint Ninian's Bay, a little to the south of the island, during the fishing season, some of the French fishermen in rough weather annually anchor. Having disposed of a portion of their brandy and tobacco to the natives, without, it is to be feared, many qualms of conscience on either side as to the payment, or rather non-payment, of duty thereon, the foreigners make for the nearest shop, and lay in a supply of such commodities

as gunpowder, pepper, biscuits, and sweetmeats, before putting out to sea again.

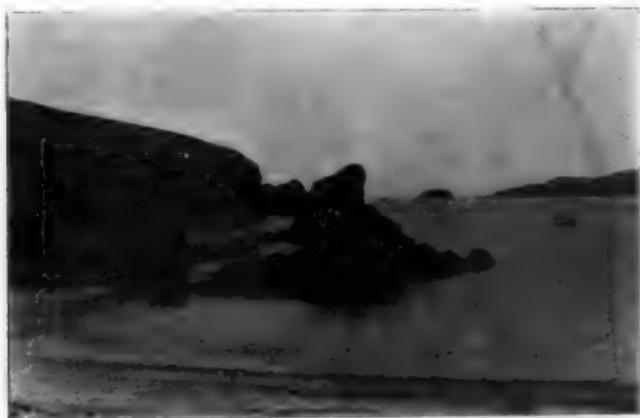
At Troswickness, on the south-east side of the island, within two or three miles of Spiggie, is to be found some grand and remarkable coast scenery, which is well worth a visit even in a country abounding with strangely shaped and beautiful sea rocks.

Besides exploring and seeing the historical places in the district, several other delightful pastimes are to be enjoyed at Dunrossness—and first and foremost amongst these must be mentioned the angling.

Of Shetland it can hardly yet be said, as of so many Highland places, that

The Cockney angler up to date
To loch and river hies,
Till northern trout begin to hate
The sight of London flies.

The islands are perhaps too far north for that. Loch Spiggie, which is close to the hotel of the same name, is for the quality, quantity, average size, shape, and gameness of its fish probably unsurpassed in the archipelago. It is about a mile and a quarter in length by half a mile across at the widest part, and twenty pound baskets of trout, averaging about three-quarters of a pound each, are to be taken from it at favourable times, whilst many heavier



SPIGGIE VOE

fish are often killed. The largest one caught in 1898 weighed 4½ lbs. They are beautiful silvery fish, which many ichthyologists suppose to be a cross between the sea and the native trout. They "cut up" a salmon-red in the flesh, are salmon-flavoured, and closely resemble in appearance and taste the trout of Loch Leven. The only drawback to the sport on Spiggie is that towards the end of the season the fish are loth to rise to a fly, and can then only be taken in any quantity, by less agreeable and sportsmanlike methods. During good seasons the sea-trout fishing, in the loch, and Spiggie Voe and Bay, also affords pleasant sport.

Besides Spiggie, the shallow little loch of Brew, which in winter mingles its waters with the larger lake, gives good angling. It is about three-quarters of a mile in length, and simply teems with trout averaging about three to the pound, which very rarely fail to rise well to the fly. There are also one or two out-lying lochs, and several burns, that can be fished from the hotel, where trout, generally peaty-black chaps, are plentiful. There is capital sea fishing too for votaries of that sport. "Pillocks" and "Sillocks," the young of the coalfish, haddocks, halibut, cod, flounders, and many other kinds of salt-water fish are to be caught in large quantities. But the most exciting sea sport of all is a hunt of the bottle-nosed whales, now not nearly so frequent an occurrence in the islands as it used to be. When the Leviathans have been sighted they are driven in shore and killed by the peasants :—

They man their boats, and all the young men
With whatsoever might the monsters harm ;
Pikes, halberds, spits, and darts that wound afar,
The tools of peace, and implements of war.

In addition to the fishing, there is capital shooting of its kind to be had in Dunrossness. Wild ducks of many varieties, snipe, curlew, golden and ringed plover, and rabbits are to be shot, with but few restrictions. Though grouse are plentiful in Orkney there are none in Shetland. They have been introduced into the latter country, but without success. The reason for this

is said to be to a great extent because of the large numbers of birds of prey in the islands. Hoodie crows, ravens, and hawks of various kinds are abundant, and scarcely ever destroyed, as there are no gamekeepers, and in consequence the eggs or young of grouse would be likely to be soon purloined by the feathered poachers. Seals are numerous on the coast, but difficult to procure, as although frequently hit and killed, in nine cases out of ten they sink at once when shot, which fact seems to make the so-called sport an unnecessarily cruel one. The only way by which to make absolutely sure of getting a seal is to shoot him dead on a rock before he can reach the water. Only two were killed in Dunrossness during the season of 1898, though sportsmen were often out after them.

For the ornithologist, Shetland, and especially the southern part, of which many rare migratory birds make a resting place, has many charms. A pair of white-tailed or sea eagles are still said to nest on Fitful Head, and the very rare red-necked phalarope nests in the swamp lying between Lochs Spiggie and Brew. For the oologist too, especially where water birds are concerned, and also for the conchologist, there are capital opportunities of finding good and rare specimens.

The peasants of Shetland are a good-natured, obliging, and unsophisticated class of people. Most of the young and middle-aged men are engaged during the season at the "haaf" or deep-sea fishing, often sleeping out in an open boat for two or three nights at a time, and only returning to the shore for the purpose of disposing of their fish before starting off again. In winter they have plenty of leisure time on their hands. The women, if their life is free from the perils attendant upon deep-sea fishing, as a rule work much harder ashore than their male relatives. Every kind of agricultural work upon the miniature farms is performed by the weaker sex. They are also constantly engaged throughout the summer, in the cutting, stacking, and leading of peats, which have to be ready and dry in good time for the winter. You meet such peat carriers frequently upon the road,

bearing their "kishies" or baskets of turf, and working simultaneously at their inevitable knitting. A Shetland woman would be as likely to forget to don the kerchief for her head, or the "rivlins" (shoes of untanned cowhide) for her feet, as to go forth from her dwelling without her wool and her knitting-needles. All the work connected with the well-known beautiful Shetland shawls—some of which are so fine in texture that they can be drawn through a finger ring—is done by the peasant women, and the picturesque old-fashioned spinning wheel is to be found in all the cottages. When the shawls are finished they are sold to the nearest dealer, thoroughly washed and dried, and subsequently sent South to be sold. The reason for the extreme softness of the wool from which the shawls are made is because it is plucked off the sheep's body instead of being sheared. The former method, which seems a somewhat cruel one, is said to much improve the texture of the wool. Many old customs

still survive in the district. One of the most common, and perhaps to the Southerner the most quaint, is the payment by the natives in kind. Eggs are the most common instance of this, and are practically money. Valued at about sixpence a dozen, these commodities are accepted in payment for almost everything. A child has actually been observed at a store that is also a post office to give two eggs in exchange for a penny postage stamp, a form of payment that would somewhat startle the smart

young woman behind the counter of a metropolitan post office.

Several of the old superstitions, especially in the more remote parts of the country, are still believed. Only a year or two ago, an instance of the reluctance to save a person from drowning was evidenced upon one of the islands. The unfortunate man in question could, it is said, have been rescued, but was cruelly left to his fate. The belief used to be a very common one in

Shetland that some evil was certain to befall the rescuer of any one from drowning:—"There is little doubt it had been originally introduced," says Sir Walter Scott, "as an excuse for suffering those who attempted to escape from the wreck to perish unassisted, so that, there being no survivor, she might be considered as lawful plunder." Such cases are happily now, however, of rare occurrence in the islands.

The crops of Shetland are late, scant and poor. Oats, potatoes, and turnips are all grown, but bere, a coarse kind of barley, is the principal production. In

most cases the people are too poor, and the land under cultivation too little, for new agricultural implements and machinery to be used; and nearly everywhere almost the whole routine of farm work, including the reaping and threshing, is done by hand.

The peasants' houses in many parts of the country have much improved of late years, but if the better-built and modern cottages are the more comfortable, the old-fashioned ones are certainly more picturesque. So old, so grey, so rough-



SHETLAND PEAT-CARRIER

looking, and so much in harmony with the landscape are many of the latter, with their thatched and moss-covered roofs, that one could almost imagine they had naturally grown from the ground of themselves, and that the hand of man had taken no part in their construction.

Nearly all animals in Shetland are smaller than elsewhere, and comparatively speaking the ponies are the smallest of all. Most of those used in the country now, however, are cross-bred with animals of larger size. But in one or two places the pure Shetland breed is still kept up. The principal of these is the large pony farm lately belonging to the Marquis of Londonderry, on the Island of Bressay, where the height of these diminutive horses averages only about forty inches. There is little demand for the real Shetlanders now. Excepting for ladies to drive and children to ride, they are not much used. When properly fed and stabled in the South the ponies live much longer than on their native wilds, where vegetation is very scant, and where often they are more than half starved.

If mild and fine, June is certainly one of the pleasantest months to spend upon "the Old Rock." The nights are so light during that month that one can go comfortably to bed at midnight or read a newspaper by means of the natural light. It is a strange experience at first to have only about an hour of semi-darkness, and to hear skylarks singing,

as they do, almost the entire night through.

Spiggie Hotel, aforementioned, is a comfortable little temperance hostelry capable of accommodating about thirty persons, and is centrally situated both for tourists and anglers.

You are pretty much out of the world at Dunrossness, though of course there are many places in Shetland where you would be much more so. You have no communication with the outside world excepting by the steamer that touches fortnightly at Spiggie Bay during the summer and autumn months, the mail-gig which brings your letters from Lerwick four times a week, or the telegraph office two miles distant from the inn. You are eight miles from the nearest licensed grocer, and you are twenty-three from the nearest professional hairdresser; you get your hair cut, when required, by the fishermen; and you have often to be your own fishing-rod mender and fishing-tackle maker. You live upon the plainest of fare, but amongst the most hospitable of people, who still pride themselves upon their Scandinavian origin. You enjoy the most excellent sport of its kind, combined with the inhalation of the purest mountain and sea air. Moreover, if you are for the time being far from "the busy haunts of men," you return to the urban occupations and pleasures of your life with a new and a greater zest, after a residence of some duration within "the melancholy isles of Ultima Thule."



"NEVER TOO SOON"

Am I too soon, my dear? . . .
The green is hardly awake,
The buds are lazy to break,
And the birds are not yet sure—
Scarcely a tune, my dear,
Trilled for a true joy's sake—
Nature has still an ache
That April alone can cure.

Am I too soon to sing with my heart
Ere ever a bird finds voice,
When the bosom of Earth must sorrow and smart
Ere the children of Earth rejoice?
Am I too soon? . . . Ah, no! my dear—
It's never too soon to sing
When one has a joy to show, my dear,
More perfect than Spring.

Winter? When did a winter pass?
Not since you came, my dear!
Sadness? How could I sigh "alas!"
After your name, my dear?
Winter has missed me,
Gladness has kissed me,
And life is at noon, my dear,—
And you are my Spring,
And therefore I sing
"Never too soon, my dear!"



WRITTEN BY W. B. WALLACE, B.A. ILLUSTRATED BY M. YORK SHUTER

I.

THE BEGUM OF BHOPAL.



HE slaves had set down her palanquin beneath the grateful shade of the giant banyan and departed. The presence of the princess and her maidens had for the nonce converted the garden into a zenana, not to be polluted by the step of man, and the bearers had joined the royal guards, who kept watch just without its precincts.

The languorous heat of the afternoon had rapidly induced slumber, and the distant laughter of her attendants, who were disporting themselves in the refreshing waters of the great tank, and pelting each other emulously with nenu-phars and roses, and even the sacred lotus, did not disturb the Begum of Bhopal.

Her rest was tranquil and happy. Why, indeed, should it be otherwise? Was she not young and beautiful, wealthy and powerful, and a queen? Nay, on the present occasion, it was,

perhaps, even more blissful than its wont. Could you have peeped between the silken hangings of her palanquin, you would have seen a faint smile upon her face, and a slight roseate flush just tinged the pale olive of her rounded cheek.

She was dreaming. Of whom or what? Perchance of the gallant and handsome Mahratta warrior, Mohamed Khan, the trusted captain of her guard.

As she slept, her right arm, which had slipped from its cushion, hung gracefully down from the carved ivory edge of her couch, and upon her finger scintillated the vivid fiery rays of a magnificent opal.

And so the peaceful moments glided on. Although she was a princess, they were perhaps the happiest of her life.

Silvery ripples of girlish laughter from the bath, a faint breath of wind sighing through the banyan grove—these were the only sounds audible.

Stay, there was now assuredly a slight but constant rustle somewhere other than that of the breeze in the fan-like leaves.

Yes, between the massive roots and

the spreading shadows of the banyan a man was crawling, wriggling like a snake, nearer and ever nearer to the palanquin and its slumbering occupant.

The dress of the intruder was mean, his form slight, though lithe and sinewy, but there was the light of a terrible and demoniac hate in his yellow feline eyes, and held between his teeth there gleamed a formidable creese.

Orientals are always capricious, often cruel, and seldom just. Only the day before, the Begum had ordered the bastinado to be administered to her Malay

grove would afford him an opportunity of wreaking his revenge and probably effecting his escape as well.

It had been an easy matter for the Malay to conceal himself in the garden, and now he was within measurable distance of the goal he coveted.

With infinite caution, and inch by inch, he raised himself and peered around. There was nobody in sight, but for all that he knew that not an instant was to be lost. The Begum might wake, or her maidens might return. There would be a struggle and cries for



"SLOWLY, STEALTHILY, NOISELESSLY, HE DREW ASIDE THE CURTAINS."

servant Ibrahim for a trifling fault. Smarting under the indignity, which he felt far more than the physical torture, the man had registered an internal vow of vengeance. At first he had determined to run *amok*, to draw his creese, rush upon the guards, and slay and be slain. Cooler reflection, however, suggested that it would be something worse than mere folly to sacrifice his own life and the lives of other innocent persons while the author of his disgrace remained unpunished. And then it had suddenly flashed across his mind that the customary siesta of the princess in the comparative solitude of the banyan-

help, which would be speedily forthcoming.

Slowly, stealthily, noiselessly, he drew aside the curtains of the palanquin, gloated for a moment on his prey, and then with one swift, sure blow, into which he put all his strength, clove the heart beating so tranquilly beneath the fine transparent gauze vest.

The usual savage passion for mutilation, and perhaps a desire for the glittering jewel, gave him brief pause while he severed the small, drooping hand at the wrist and thrust the bleeding member into a bag which he carried suspended from his waist.

Successfully eluding the vigilance of the guards, he then made his way into the tangled depths of the adjoining Terai. Then he felt himself secure. A grim smile of satisfaction crossed his visage. Had he not done wisely and well? He had not run *amok*, according to the absurd fashion of his race; he had effectually avenged himself without loss of life or limb.

And yet death was tracking him; it was his fate, for all his precautions, to slay and be slain.

As he passed through the jungle a hungry tiger that had been crouching in ambush, watching for a victim, leaped upon him, pinned him to the ground, and bore away the lacerated body in triumph to his lair.

Next day some peasants found the bag, which had become detached in the fatal struggle, lying on the path.

A century later, and a few years after the suppression of the Indian Mutiny, the opal ring—which in the interim had often changed owners—became the property of Lieutenant Carruthers, of the 5th Gurkhas.

II.

IN CLUBLAND.

On one of those frightful nights of storm and tempest, sleet and slush, and general unpleasantness, which luckless Londoners had to endure last winter—1898-99—three men, Vavasour, Fairfax, and Brandon, were enjoying their cigars, and a rather discursive chat in the luxurious smoking-room of the Hermæum, which presented a sufficiently striking contrast to the state of affairs outside.

Somehow or other the conversation turned upon opals, of all things in the world. It was Arthur Fairfax who gave the ball its first impetus.

"By-the-bye, I saw you at the Savoy last night, Vavasour," he said. "Did you notice how very charming Lady Harringay, that smartest of smart women, was looking? She seemed to set superstition at defiance, for she was wearing a row of superb opals round her throat."

"I am afraid you are rather behind the times, my dear Arthur," cut in Brandon, maliciously. "Don't you know

that opals, in obedience to the sovereign fiat of Fashion, the Queen of the World, have emerged from their temporary retirement, and are now all the rage with our Society dames?"

Fairfax looked abashed. There is nothing upsets a man so much as being thought not quite up to date, and Vavasour hastened to take up the parable, whether anxious to maintain his own reputation as the most interminable talker in the club, or to relieve the evident embarrassment of his friend.

"I confess," he began, "that I have always regarded these stones, with the fiery demon at their heart, as the Arabs will tell you, as particularly uncanny ever since, as a boy, I devoured a certain weird story about them, introduced by Sir Walter Scott in his *Anne of Geierstein*."

"Do tell, Vavasour," interposed Brandon, with a laughable assumption of the nasal Transatlantic twang.

But Vavasour, much as he liked the sound of his own voice, was not to be drawn thus.

"No, thank you," he replied with dignity. "I perceive your education has been scandalously neglected, and as I have neither time nor inclination to supply its deficiencies, I must refer you to the romance in question."

Brandon had choked off his adversary, and promptly availed himself of the opportunity thus afforded for airing his own views. It is perhaps necessary to explain that he was the scientific man *par excellence* of the club, and that anthropology was his special hobby.

"It is extremely difficult," he said, "to account for the strange circumstance that opals and peacocks' feathers are both universally considered unlucky. The thing is absurd on the face of it, but like many another absurdity it is a fact to be reckoned with. And the craze, moreover, is no new-fangled one; it is of hoary, nay, immemorial antiquity. Now I have only a theory to offer, but such as it is you are welcome to it."

"When the æsthetic sense first dawned in the benighted minds of our remote and respectable ancestors, the cave-dwellers, I fancy they went in as recklessly for personal adornment as the

women nowadays do for new hats. Feathers and stones are amongst the earliest possessions of savages, and the gaudiest feathers and handsomest stones would naturally find the greatest favour in the eyes of our unsophisticated fore-fathers. Now can you imagine that any stone would be more popular than the milky opal, with fire, man's earliest friend—not a fiend, as Vavasour suggests—dwelling enshrined in its heart? And what plumage is more gloriously iridescent than that of the peacock, more calculated to appeal to the Trog-lodyte's love of colour? The feathers and the gems, then, would be universally prized. So far so good; but then you must next remember that the tenure of property in those primitive days was, for obvious reasons, rather precarious. The possessor of these coveted treasures would only hold them—as the priest of Nemi did his office—until a stronger man than he came along, slew him, and despoiled him of his goods. And now you see the drift of my argument. In course of time these gauds came to be thought unlucky, for their owners almost invariably came to grief in the long run."

"A very ingenious theory, indeed," remarked a grave voice at the speaker's elbow.

He started, turned round, and to his surprise beheld Colonel Carruthers, who had joined the little group unobserved.

The Colonel was an old Anglo-Indian, of gentlemanly aspect, soldierly bearing, and unobtrusive, nay, almost taciturn manners. He was always faultlessly attired and perfectly groomed, but his thoughtful face wore the impress of some deep and abiding sorrow, and his only apparent relaxation was a quiet game of chess, at which scientific pastime he was an adept.

"Gentlemen," proceeded Colonel Carruthers, while his hearers were utterly astounded at his unwonted loquacity, "I have listened with deep interest to your conversation. I need hardly say that I should not have played eavesdropper had it been of a private nature. Will you now permit me to state that I know from personal experience, or rather"—instantly correcting himself—"from the experience of a friend, that in this case the voice of superstition, for once at least, is the voice of truth, and that opals are unlucky—bring misfortune to their owners, even in our present advanced stage of civilisation. I have no theory; I do not attempt to account for the thing; I merely mention it as a fact."



"HE STARTED, TURNED ROUND, AND TO HIS SURPRISE BEHELD COLONEL CARRUTHERS"

He paused, but Brandon begged him to proceed.

"It all happened years ago," said the Colonel, with a deep sigh. "My friend, a young officer, whom I will call Lieutenant Vintram, was home from India on sick leave. It was his fortune, or rather fate, to meet one night at a ball a beautiful girl, to whom his life became thenceforth devoted. Lucy Okeden was the daughter of a wealthy London alderman, who had purchased a magnificent place down in Cheshire, and her parents cherished vast ambitions on their only child's behalf. It was scarcely likely that they would encourage the pretensions of a young subaltern who had nothing but his pay and his expectations. Nor did they.

"One of you gentlemen mentioned Sir Walter Scott a few moments ago. Lucy Okeden resembled only too closely in her character, beauty, position, and untimely end, her hapless namesake, Lucy Ashton, the Bride of Lammermoor. Fair and simple, pure and innocent, fragile and yielding as the daisy of Burns' pathetic poem, she was fated to become the victim of the insane ambition of others, and to be crushed beneath a merciless plough-share—the ploughshare of destiny.

"Lucy Okeden, it is true, gave her heart unreservedly to the young officer, her first and her only love, but she was as wax in the hands of her vulgar and scheming parents, who barely tolerated Vintram. But the lovers lived only in the present, and saw not or recked not of the ominous clouds fast gathering on the horizon.

"In the midst of a joyous summer, wherein the enamoured pair frequently met at fêtes and pic-nics, and in the houses of mutual friends, Lieutenant Vintram received a letter summoning him to the bedside of his father, who lay dangerously ill, dying, it was thought, in London. In their parting interview by the shores of a romantic lake in the alderman's extensive park, he gave his love, as a seal of their engagement, a magnificent opal ring, which he had purchased in India, and which—so the grim tradition went—had been taken a hundred years before from the dis-severed hand of a beautiful Begum of

Bhopal, who had been assassinated and mutilated by her Malay servant. And then he tore himself away from her embrace. Strange are the ways of fate! Little did he dream that he would never, never behold Lucy more.

"His father's illness was long and tedious. He was consequently a fixture in London; but he wrote frequently to Cheselden Manor. His letters remained unanswered. This amazed him; for a kind of informal sanction of their engagement had been wrung from Lucy's parents shortly before his departure. There came, however, one fatal morning, when he received a packet. It contained the opal ring and these words: 'Farewell for ever. My parents have withdrawn their consent to our union. My heart is broken, but I must obey them.—LUCY.'

"That very day he heard at his club that a marriage had been arranged, and was shortly about to take place, between Miss Okeden and the Earl of Altringham. The latter was known to him by repute as a venerable and gouty peer, whose antecedents were not quite as satisfactory as his rent-roll. He hurried home in a state of frenzy, and lost not a moment in sending back the ring without comment to her whom he had so adored, but whom he now cursed in his heart as false and fickle. He at least would not be a party to her act of betrayal.

"But the next dawn brought sorrow and repentance in its train. He hurried down to Cheshire, and that evening reached the village, in whose outskirts Cheselden Manor stands. He entered the park and sought the border of the lake, the spot where they had parted. He scarcely knew why he did so. Perhaps he had some vague idea that he might meet Lucy there. He sat down on a rustic bench where they had often lingered on the sweet summer evenings. It was fine autumnal weather now, but for him all the beauty of nature had departed. He looked towards the house, and was surprised to note that, with the exception of a twinkling taper in one or two of the windows, all was enveloped in darkness.

"A man came up. It was Bill Adams, one of the keepers. On recognising

Lieutenant Vintram in the moonlight, he touched his hat respectfully, and paused for a moment.

" 'No doubt you have heard the sad news, sir,' he said, with a touch of genuine feeling in his rough voice. 'No? Poor Miss Lucy is dead. You see, sir, she was never strong, and she did not take kindly, so it was thought, to the match with Lord Altrincham. Well, this morning she received a parcel. The lady's maid says that when she saw the writing her poor hand trembled so that she could scarcely open the packet. When she did so at last, an opal ring dropped out. Miss Lucy, pale as death, took it up, kissed it, and placed it on the table beside her. The very next

moment she put her hand to her heart and fell to the ground fainting, as Mary thought, but when she raised her she was dead.' "

The Colonel's voice had long been faltering, and his story ended in something suspiciously like a sob. He turned aside his head and hastened away, acknowledging the thanks of his auditors with a silent bow.

* * * * *

"The friend was all a myth," said Brandon to Vavasour, as they parted that night beneath the lamp at the entrance to the chambers of the latter. "Colonel Carruthers has told us the story of his own life."





PALAIS RUBENS AT ANTWERP

Peter Paul Rubens

WRITTEN BY C. H. CRYMES. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS



N English knight, a graduate of that essentially English University of Cambridge, and a brilliant diplomat, the greatest painter of his day, and one of the greatest the world has ever seen, it is at first sight astonishing that so little is generally known in this country of Peter Paul Rubens. But on second consideration there is perhaps some excuse for this apparent

indifference, insomuch as England is so poor in examples of this master's art.

At no time would a tribute to the memory of Rubens be out of place, but perhaps at the present moment it is the more called for when we remember that his countrymen have been recently commemorating the centenary of Van Dijck, the most celebrated of his many pupils.

The grandson of an apothecary and

the son of an Antwerp Justice, Rubens was born on the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul, June 29th, 1577, at Siegen. The place of his birth has been the subject of much controversy, but the greatest weight of evidence is in favour of Siegen, in Westphalia. During his infancy his parents removed to Cologne, and it was in this city that the future painter spent the first nine years of his life, until the death of his father, when his mother returned to Antwerp and placed him in a Jesuit school in that city. Here he received a literary education, and afterwards, having early displayed a talent for art, he was enrolled as a pupil of Van Noort, at that time the most renowned painter in Antwerp, and with whom he remained four years.

In accordance with the artistic traditions of that date, in 1600 he went to continue his studies in Italy. On his arrival in that country his remarkable talent was quickly recognised by that great connoisseur of art, the Duke of Mantua, who not only made use of his talent as a painter, but on one occasion, under the guise of an "artistic commission," sent him as special ambassador to Philip III. of Spain.

After a residence of seven years in Italy, during which time he chiefly devoted his attentions to the artistic treasures in the cities of Mantua, Rome, and Genoa, he was suddenly called to Antwerp on account of the illness of his mother, who, however, died before his arrival.

The next year he was appointed Court painter to the Arch-Duke Albert, Governor of the Netherlands.

His marriage to his first wife, Isabella Brandt, followed on this appointment. Thus being settled in Antwerp, and his position assured he opened a school of painting, which his reputation soon filled with pupils.

Amongst the many works which he executed during the next few years, he painted that great masterpiece, the "Descent from the Cross," which was begun in 1611 and finished in 1614.

In 1620, at the invitation of Marie de Medici, he repaired to the Luxembourg in Paris, where he was engaged to decorate two galleries, depicting scenes in her own life and that of Henri IV.

Whilst engaged in this work he made the acquaintance of the Duke of Buckingham, who was eventually instrumental in bringing him to London, to the Court of Charles I.

However, before he visited England, he went as ambassador from the Hague to the Court of Philip IV. at Madrid. During his stay here he executed many of his important works, including the celebrated "Adoration of the Magi."

Then, in 1629, we find him at the Court of Charles I. in the dual rôle, which was not new to him, of painter and diplomat. Charles showed him every mark of favour, bestowing upon him the honour of knighthood, and his popularity was further evinced by the University of Cambridge conferring on him the degree of Master of Arts. Whilst at the English Court, Rubens painted, among many other works, the picture known as the "Blessings of Peace," and he also sketched the designs for decorating Wren's additions to Whitehall.

The next year he returned to Antwerp, and married his second wife, the beautiful Helena Fourment, a girl of sixteen, whose face we frequently meet in the masterpieces adorning the galleries of Europe.

From this period of his career until his death Rubens led an uncommonly active life, paying repeated visits to London, Paris, and Madrid, in the services of both art and politics.

The great master died in 1640, ending a life of continued success, popularity, and affluence, at the age of sixty-two.

Having thus briefly outlined the career of the great painter, let us turn to the general consideration of his works. These we find scattered all over the Continent, to a number very nearly approaching a thousand. Besides those in the Netherlands and England, there are the pictures in the galleries of Paris, Vienna, Madrid, Berlin, Munich, and St. Petersburg, each of which boasts of some work from the hand of this mighty painter.

Space will not allow us to deal with even a portion of them, and even when we attempt to classify them according to subject we are confronted with an amazing versatility. There are histori-

cal pictures, both ecclesiastical and secular ; there are landscapes and portraits, besides works which deal with the homely scenes of common life. And here we are reminded of the probable cause of this wonderful versatility. As we have already shown, the life of Rubens was passed amongst varied scenes and experiences. In the very midst of his work he was frequently

moments of our life ? No longer shall there be any need for us to picture in our "mind's eye" that which is vividly brought before our "natural eyes," in a depth of warmth and colour. And in truth the power of creative genius is best fostered in the mind of the artist by change and variety. The more of creation he sees and lives in, the more he is induced to create.



THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

passing from city to city, from one Court to another.

And here it is important to remember that change and variety are the very food of the artist's magic power, creative genius.

For what is the one great aim of the painter ? Is it not to set before our eyes that which we have either actually gazed upon or imagined in the most impressive

Shut up the student and bookman in the retirement of his library, so that he may obtain the concentration of mind which is essential to his acquisition of knowledge ; but let the artist live and wander amongst life, for is it not life that he must portray ?

But notwithstanding his wanderings, Rubens kept intact his individuality. The days of the hampering of indivi-

duality had not yet set in. It is true indeed that during his sojourn in Italy, at the beginning of his career, he was influenced in the dramatic power of his conceptions by Michael Angelo. It is likewise true that from the examples of the Venetian school, more particularly the works of Paul Veronese, he derived the richness of his colouring. He, however, seems to have been in no way influenced by his contemporaries in the Dutch and Flemish schools.

He drew his subjects from different sources, and seems to have had different aims in view.

This is especially noticeable in his ecclesiastical pictures. Living as he did in the Spanish Netherlands, where the Roman Catholic faith was still predominant, he always represents in his works the historic school of the old faith in contrast to the evidences of the Reformed faith, to be found in the works of his Dutch contemporaries, and here we trace the effect of his training in the Jesuit seminary. The splendour and richness and the gorgeous accessories of his pictures all point to the influence of the then all-powerful Jesuits. This same influence tended to deepen his love of brilliancy and display of colour.

All his ecclesiastical decorations partake of this same gorgeous and magnificent character. In energy, brilliance, and display of colouring he has rarely, if ever, been surpassed.

In addition to his undoubted genius, Rubens had that which is as indispensable to the lasting success of the artist, namely, a complete mastery of the mechanical part of his work. This is one point which is universally conceded to him by all critics. The lack of this power is one of the chief defects at the present day amongst the members of the impressionist school, many of whom possess undoubted genius, but do not possess or value manual skill to its due extent.

However, in forming a correct estimate of the works of the great master, we must not blind ourselves to his undoubted defects. In many of his works there is an inelegance and want of grace, especially when treating of the female form. In some of these there

is a flabbiness and coarseness almost approaching sensuality.

This flagrant want of taste seems to be one with an absence of poetical conception and sentiment which is discernible in many of his paintings. And what one so often deplores is the non-existence of any evidence of spirituality or soul in an otherwise magnificent conception.

The chief examples of this master's work which we possess in England are "Peace and War," "The Rape of the Sabine Women," and the exquisitely charming "Chapeau de Paille," all of which we find on the walls of the National Gallery. At Blenheim Palace, the residence of the Duke of Marlborough, is the "Rape of Proserpine," and the celebrated portrait of Rubens, his wife (Helena Fourment) and child. In the gallery of the Duke of Westminister we find "The History of Ixion in the Cloud" and "Diana and her Nymphs surprised by Satyrs," the last named having been painted for Charles I. in 1629.

Beyond these, the works perhaps most familiar to English people generally are those which, apart from its own undeniable merits, have caused thousands to visit Antwerp's beautiful Gothic cathedral. As you enter the south transept from the Place Verte, immediately on your right hangs the great masterpiece, "The Descent from the Cross." This is considered to be one of his grandest works. It is magnificently drawn. The grouping is masterly, and of the finished execution and colouring, no words of praise are too adequate. The white drapery with which the body of the Saviour is about to be enveloped is particularly striking, and suggests a trace of the early influence on Rubens of the works of the Italian masters, particularly of Daniele Voltena. With regard, however, to the central figure, the body of the Saviour, we are immediately conscious of the utter absence of any exalted imagination or spirituality in the conception. It is simply a dead body—inert, lifeless, soulless. There is no suggestion of the approaching resurrection. It is a veritable "triumph of Death" rather than a "triumph over death." Indeed, throughout the whole

picture there is a lack of devotional enthusiasm. It might verily have been painted by a Pagan or a Pantheist. It is a striking instance of that want of soul or spirituality which we have already deplored in the works of Rubens. However, it must not be inferred from this

a courtier—or the world, worldly. Art, we must remember, had long ceased to be exclusively the handmaid of religion, and now, at this period of religious upheaval, there was beginning to appear that almost entire departure of the devotional spirit from the hearts of painters.



THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN

that we accuse Rubens of being devoid of soul or spirituality; he seems indeed, to have been all through life what would be termed "a good Catholic." He observed, no doubt as a result of his early training in the Jesuit seminary, all the outward forms of his faith, but for all that, Rubens was in his ideas and tastes

Art no longer sprang from a predominating faith, but nevertheless we are bound to confess that it was the product of a faith that had been.

The faces of the three Marys, especially that of the Virgin, display the careful execution of the painter's earlier period, and a more refined conception

than is usual in Rubens' treatment of the female form. Legend associates Van Dijck with a part in this particular portion of the picture; but here it is feared romance must give way to truth, as it is most unlikely that Van Dijck was as yet a pupil of Rubens (1614).

This renowned masterpiece was originally painted for the Guild of Arquebusiers, in settlement of a dispute with regard to some land on which Rubens had built his house. He nevertheless is said to have received 2,400 florins for this picture. The "Elevation of the Cross," though a magnificent work, is inferior to the "Descent." It was completed in 1610. The attitudes of the principal figures are striking and natural, though perhaps inclined to be heavy. The painter has especially shown in this work his wonderful knowledge of the anatomy of the human body, the

detailed execution of which has rarely been surpassed. By the introduction of the horses and a dog into the composition, Rubens has given us a glimpse of his marked genius in portraying animal life. The same, however, must be said of this as of the "Descent," that there is a distinct absence of sentiment or devotional enthusiasm. Above the high altar is the "Assumption of the Virgin," the best of the many canvases that Rubens devoted to this subject. It reveals to us his complete comprehension of religious decorative art. The Virgin is depicted with a wonderful power of ascension, amongst dazzling clouds of glory, surrounded by an angelic choir. Below are the Apostles and other saints engaged in adoration. It is one of the few works which occupies the place originally intended for it by the artist. It is best seen from the second chapel on the south ambulatory.





A NATIVE IN HIS BOAT

A Holiday on the Broads

WRITTEN BY P. HEYWOOD HADFIELD.

ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

THE August sun was blazing down on the devoted heads of those who were kept in the City on business. Top hats and frock coats imprisoned the perspiring bodies of the respectable citizens, and the only pleasure of life seemed to be a long, cool drink. It was the heat wave, and the thermometer climbed up to ninety in the shade. But we cared nothing for these things; we were bent on pleasure, and so we left the burning pavements of the town to find ourselves in a few hours on board our yacht-home on the Norfolk Broads.

There let the sun focus its rays upon us—it would find us prepared as to costume, and protected by the breeze which always moves upon the quiet waters.

Did we get too hot, what was easier than to remove the few garments we wore, and to plunge over the side for a long, cool swim?

There is a charm about the lakes and waters of Broadland that cannot be adequately pictured by the penman; a flat picture, composed of little more than fields of waving reeds, relieved

only by the gaunt outline of a busy windmill, the great black sail of a trading wherry, or the tall white raiment of a butterfly yacht. The material is poor, but the picture is magnificent—no artist can give an impression of its peculiar charm. One must be there—spend one's days, nights and evenings on the quiet, narrow waters of the rivers, on the gently rippling surface of its lakes, to find the paradise of nature which is there.

We joined our wherry at North Walsham, a town where worry and hurry are not, and where to-morrow is as important as to-day. In the picturesque old town is the schoolhouse where Nelson learnt his first lessons.

North Walsham is out of the true Broads district, so we had to sail our way, the great black sail brushing the shrubs about the banks, down a narrow canal. Several ancient locks, the more picturesque for their evident need of repair, had to be passed through, and occasionally we had to lower the huge mast, while we pinched through some little one-arched bridge, into which the wherry fitted as a finger into a glove.

We moored our first evening just at

the entrance to Barton Broad. All round us the water was carpeted with white and yellow water-lilies; it only needed to stretch out a hand to gather a bouquet fit for a queen. Opposite our saloon windows was no bank, and no place where a man could stand, but instead a great army of reeds, among which the crowned heads of the bulrushes raised their plumes of sovereignty. The Broad is a good expanse of shallow water, its bosom graced with the full richness of the water plants, and populated with many coy pairs of water fowl. As one sailed about, ignoring the channel and its naked guiding-posts, the keel churned up the vegetable ooze, which slowly but surely is filling up the lake. A little dyke led from the Broad to a staithes, where several wherries were lazily discharging their loads opposite some giant stacks of reeds.

The reed forms the harvest of the Broads, and is as carefully homed each year as is the farmer's rich meadow hay. No straw thatch can compare with one made of reeds, and such a one will make most cottages picturesque.

There is a *Pons Asinorum* on the little river Ant—the bridge at Ludham—which is a trial and delay to many yachtsmen, but our boat just squeezed through, so we passed from the winding narrow waters of the little river to the broader, busier Bure.

We sailed by the ruins of St. Benet's Abbey. Not much remains of a once great pile, and much of this has been used in past times as the foundation of a big windmill, which now, in its turn, lies in ruin. But the old foundations on the bank show how great must once have been this benefice of the Church. To-day nothing remains but a few ruined walls and an Abbot—the Bishop of Norwich.

Then we turned inland again to Potter Heigham. A long line of pleasure boats were moored by the bridge—the luxuriously furnished wherry with a whole family on board; the large yachts with the great tall masts and far-reaching bowsprits; the awning

boat, manned by lads fresh from school. A fleet of boats of all sorts and sizes, manned by crews of all sorts and conditions, but with this one quality in common—one which is latent in most Englishmen—a love of the water.

For a fortnight we sailed about the Broads, finding new beauty-spots each hour. Here and there, moored among the screening reeds, would be some ark of an old boat—the home of the eel-setter. In his little house by his "set" the waterman watches his nets all night. A wonderfully interesting type are these men—fishermen, wildfowlers, sportsmen and naturalists they are, one and all. Nature is their only book, and they read its every sentence. In their little double-ended boats, a trusty old gun laid carefully in the bow, an ancient and cunning setter dog sitting gravely in the stern, these dwellers of the Fens punt themselves through the reeds, searching for wild fowl.

We visited Hickling Broad, a great wind-swept expanse of water, and passed up a winding dyke to Horsey Mere. We moored in a dyke by a reed-thatched cottage, and that after-



MOORED AT HORSEY MERE

noon walked a mile over the sand-hills for a bathe in the German Ocean. Then to Wroxham Broad, the Queen of Queens, with its tree-begirt shores and deep waters. A favourite sailing ground this for the yachtsman, so its surface is always gay with white wings.

Running with the tide to Yarmouth, we moored to the quay of what might well have been some old town of Brittany. The old houses opposite

We fled from his kingdom on to the broad salt flats of Breydon Water. At high tide a great sheet of water, at low a big expanse of mud-banks, through which a narrow channel leads to the rivers entering at the upper end. The tide was rushing out rapidly and the wind was light, so we passed slowly between the tall posts which stand as sentinels over the lake; grave-looking herons, wading on the mud banks watched us pass, and the gulls



OLD WATERGATE AT POOLE'S FERRY

were built right over the water, and an old ruined tower kept watch and ward. When the tide ran out, there were not wanting, either, those pungent odours, many and various, to heighten the resemblance to an old-fashioned continental town.

But what a change when one passes from old Yarmouth, with its memories of David Copperfield, to the new town by the sea. Paradise of the Cockney tripper it is, but a very Hades of vulgarity to the quietly disposed. A grand beach is completely under the sovereignty of the "Yarmouth Lamb."

circled above us till the tide should leave dry the feeding-ground.

Oulton Broad was very gay, for it was Regatta week. Yachts were moored on every hand, and it was a pretty sight when at eight o'clock in the morning, on a gun signal, each boat ran up a string of many coloured flags. Lowestoft is only a mile or two from Oulton. In its harbour we watched the toilers of the sea land their cargoes of freshly-caught fish, to be at once auctioned on the quay by a loud-voiced, oilskin-clad fisherman. There is another little

harbour for yachts, and a fine shore—a pleasant place for a seaside holiday.

When we regretfully left Oulton Broad and its gaiety we were bound for the ancient city of Norwich, through the anxiously-watched railway swing bridge, up the artificial and uninteresting New Cut to the riverside village of Reedham, and then winding between hills which, after the absolute flatness of other parts of the Broads, have almost the appearance of mountains. The river is busy with the traffic of trading wherries and pleasure boats, and peopled here and there by long strings of fishermen. These waters are a paradise to a certain type of fishermen; a couple moor their boats in the stream, and sit stolidly and silently fishing whilst the hand goes almost round the clock. Often we would pass a competition—a string of twenty or thirty boats moored at regular intervals, each with its two grave disciples of Isaac Walton. We moored outside Norwich, at the little riverside village of Thorpe, and made our way into the Cathedral City by a handy omnibus.

What a grand old cathedral it is! How beautiful are the ancient gates which give admission to the close, or the old watergate at Poole's Ferry!

Then we commenced our return

voyage, but we had yet to visit the choicest of all the Broads. South Walsham Broad lies secluded at the end of a long dyke. It is small, but for wealth of plant and animal life, for the number of its beautiful reed-clad bays and wooded islets, there is no other spot to compare with it. What pleasures a week's exploring of its shores could give! Nowhere can there be a more perfect haven of peace and beauty.

For a fortnight we had cruised about, caring for nothing and nobody, wearing our oldest clothes, and freed from the trammels of society. All day long we basked in the sunshine, and as our big boat gently sailed through the water, our eyes had only to look up to see some fresh scene of beauty.

Of the reflections which surrounded us—the double picture of an approaching yacht, the visionary almost as perfect as the real; the reeds and water-lilies mirrored on the water; or the beauties of each sunset, and the slowly-lifting glories of the sunrise my poor pen cannot picture.

So we returned to town, our skins as brown as coffee-berries, and our health in lusty vigour, with one hope in common—to go to the Broads again.



Quaint Old English Customs of To-day

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY REGINALD H. COCKS

THE curious ceremonials to be witnessed in various parts of the Kingdom at prescribed times and seasons (legacies they really may be termed), full of romance and simplicity, are dying hard, but for all that they are dying.

There are still some hundreds of these old folk-customs (the majority based on the wildest forms of superstition) to be found dying naturally and slowly but surely in the obscure nooks and corners of this Kingdom, where for centuries—no one really knows how long—our forefathers and their ancestors have witnessed these strange usages. They could not tell you why they put so much faith in these legendary revivals, but it is that the English as a race are strictly conservative, and have thus zealously guarded and clung tenaciously to these beliefs in spite of so-called social enlightenment.

Each season in the calendar was famous for its own peculiar observance, which was religiously and rigorously celebrated.

One of the most charming of present-day survivals in these old fashions is that known as "well-flowering," peculiar to Derbyshire, where we find the ceremony strictly observed, as each Ascension Day comes round, in all its pristine beauty.

Several villages in the land of the Peak lay claim to "well-dressing" or "flowering" as their speciality, but it is Tissington, a remote hamlet of about 330 inhabitants, that "bears the bell."

Tissington, anciently known as Tis-cinctuna, is a small parish four miles north from Ashbourne, a place immortalised in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*,

for was it not at "a very good inn, the Green Man," that the greatest of scholars put up? The hostelry stands to-day amidst rural simplicity, shorn of none of its former associations.

Tissington Hall has a very interesting history.

This fine old Elizabethan mansion, with a noble approach of lime trees more than half a mile in length, was garrisoned by Col. Fitzherbert for the King during the Civil War between Charles I. and Parliament.

Sir William, the fourth (Fitzherbert) and present lord of the manor and also principal land-owner, is a Deputy-Lieutenant, and was High Sheriff of Derbyshire from 1865-66.

St. Mary's Church deserves more than passing attention, seeing that it forms the centre of the Ascensiontide rites at Tissington.

It is built of stone, in Early Norman style, and possesses a clerestoried nave, while the low embattled tower—(Early English buttresses were added in the thirteenth century)—contains three bells, two being dated 1815.

The interior displays numerous beautiful monuments and brasses to the Fitzherberts, whose burial-place it has been for 300 years past. The Church was thoroughly restored in 1853.

Nearly hidden by woods and plantations, this charming retreat was the scene of severe contests between Royalist and Parliamentary forces during the Civil Wars, while now it is so famous for its perpetuation of this ancient rural custom, emblematic of peace in its very essence.

There are bullet-marks to be seen on one side of the Church, and a cannon-ball is preserved in the vestry.

Before describing the flowering of wells, it should be remarked that Ashbourne, too, has had its peculiar customs, but, fortunately for all concerned, these have ceased. Football was the thing on Holy Thursday, when the ball was thrown up in the Market-Place and a "fearful contest" ensued. Broken heads and shins were the order for that day.

origin of this custom is mainly due to the great drought which visited Derbyshire in 1615, when no rain fell (according to a parish register) from March 25th till May 2nd; but these five wells flowed on as usual, and people came for ten miles and more to get their water.

Thus then a thanksgiving service was appointed.

Some folks assert that the custom is



WELL FLOWERING

There are five wells or springs in the village of Tissington, which feed the river Dove as it meanders through fertile valley and pastoral sylvan scenery, which meets the eye at every turn.

These springs have never been known to fail, even when the most serious droughts have dried up every neighbouring source for miles round. The

a Popish relic, or a relic of pagan Rome, when fountains and wells were ever the object of adoration.

Now about the actual "dressing."

Wooden structures of from ten to twelve feet are roughly put together, and these form a framework for the exquisite designs to be hereafter affixed, as a background to the stonespring-troughs.

A layer of plaster of Paris or clay is placed upon the boards, and whilst damp, flower petals and berries are "pricked in," forming a most superb mosaic.

Coral berries of the holly, mountain ash and yew are stored in the winter-time by these good villagers, and the results, as will be seen by our illustrations, are emblematic of good taste and remarkable talent, the whole being most skilfully produced.

The designs are varied from year to year, and should the weather be propitious, keep good from Holy Thursday to the following Sunday.

The several wells which are thus honoured by these charming structures are known as the "Hall," "Town," "Hands," "Goodwins," and "Coffin," respectively.

But this not all. A bright, fully choral service begins the day in the Church, the rector, the Rev. James Fitzherbert (incumbent since 1876), officiating: after which a procession is formed in the nave, and a move made round and through the village to each of the five wells, where in each instance the Epistle, Gospel, Psalms, and a Hymn are repeated, a blessing being conferred upon the last of the wells visited.

The rest of the day is given over to merry making, feasting and the like.

In consequence of questionable origin, many people condemn the practice greatly, but no superstition is now connected with this unique obser�ance, which gives unusual pleasure to many whose only pleasure it is.

A poet has said of this pretty festival (the most beautiful of all the old customs now left in "Merrie England"):

Still Dovedale, yeld thy flowers to deck the fountains

Of Tissington upon its holyday :
The customs long preserved among the moun-
tains

Should not be lightly left to pass away.

The next quaint custom of which I propose here to treat, is commonly known as "mumming," and is peculiar to Berkshire, for folks to the east and west have never heard of it.

"Mumming" like "well-flowering" and indeed several other old-time ob-

servances, is dependent upon the individual efforts of a few village people for its perpetuation, seeing that little or no encouragement is, as a rule, their lot from quarters where it might be justly expected.

Dr. Johnson defined mumming as "performing frolics in a personated dress," but modern mummers do not wear masks as of yore, nor do we find them disporting themselves in the then fashionable sheep-skins, coloured paper cut up in lengths like ribbon, completing a disguise (coal-dust *ad lib.*, if burnt cork is scarce, due to the Budget's fresh impost !) which is at one and the same time effectual and economical.

Mumming is distinctly a Christmas indulgence, and dates back to the Roman Saturnalia, which would appear to be responsible for much that otherwise would be inexplicable.

Unedifying pastimes were these "miracle plays" in the past, the clergy invariably entering into the spirit of the thing with little or no reserve.

Clad in a scratch assortment of clothes snatched from the family wardrobe, deputy-moustaches of so-called burnt cork and other "effects," a small party of yokel lads will sally forth in hopes of gaining admittance to the entrance-hall (or at least the kitchen) of some respectable domicile in the neighbourhood.

Having reached thus far, one of twenty versions of "St. George and the Dragon," a doggerel rhyme of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, will be enacted by these bold sons of "corduroy," followers of the distinguished Kceans, 'tis true, but a good distance behind.

But several of these little men have a capital notion of acting, and their elocution would disparage many a "star" who boasts a loftier pinnacle of fame.

In outline the play (I would not offend these lads) runs somewhat as follows:-

Father Christmas, or an individual recognised as Molly, undertakes the responsibility of introducing the *dramatis personæ*, whereupon King George enters in company with a high opinion of "hissself." "Welcome, or welcome not," states Father Christmas on entering, thereby boldly asserting his supe-



"MUMMING" (AS PERFORMED BY VILLAGE LAIDS). "HAPPY JACK"

riority and that of his attendant touring company, with an absolute disregard of all theatrical critics, such as are fashionable at "first nights," or later in the season when other "specialists" have provided "copy" in more senses than one.

King George then, or his "super" (one "p" please, Compositor!) relates how he lost some blood on previous occasions through quarrelling with other people, and proves his absolute indifference "for Spaniard, French, or Turk."

I'll cut him and slash him as small as flies,
And send him to the cook-shop to make
mince pies,

states the worthy King, with an insight into up-to-date cookery which is really disconcerting.

A person, the Turkish Knight, accepts

the King's challenge to fight, and gives the following unique information with regard to his private anatomy :—

My body's lined with lead,
My head is made of steel.

A vigorous fight takes place 'twixt the two champions, "their swords clashing together with great noise," says the property man, while he should be wholly responsible for this part of the programme, ready with a tin kettle or warming pan in fact. The Sheffield cutlery in vogue, as a rule, on these occasions, consists of two good-tempered lads and welfless sticks of larches.

King George is wounded in the leg, and a medical man is summoned (*not summonsed*), but to balance the mortality, the other "fellah" gets wounded; in any case, a wonderful, perhaps "blue

pili for green people," is administered, a panacea for blindness and bunions, etc., with healing effect, when all the doctors at the hospital have failed.

The jester, "Jack Vinny" (but prefers it thusly, "*Mr. John Vinny*") extracts a tooth from the wounded man, and gives a valued prescription away gratis, "One pennyworth of pigeon's milk, mixed with the blood of a grasshopper, and one drop of the blood of a dying donkey," is his sterling compound and elixir of life.

The "effects" of this small theatrical company comprise a horse's tooth and a pair of formidable pliers, together with the family garment clandestinely cribbed, and strips of (Sunday) newspapers, which cut in shreds, conceal a multitude of shins and tattered raiment.

Enter Happy Jack (if the householders have sufficient patience and enough

refreshment to satisfy these wandering players), a very depressing part to play, as he has to be very melancholy when the speech (not as a rule called for) invariably has this delicate hint secreted:—

Ladies and gentlemen, our story is ended,
Our money-box is recommended, etc.

Then curtain, and a hasty exit down the front steps for further orders and halfpence.

The institution of the mummers, as already intimated, is one that has considerably declined, and we shall have attained our object if both mumming and well-flowering—two of the quaintest and most deserving of picturesque ceremonials out of the few of any real merit that now linger as a reminiscence of a forgotten period—receive a fillip from those of our readers who think that these efforts are worthy of their support.



Playing Cards

WRITTEN BY HELEN C. GORDON.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. JESSICA LEWIS

"Patience, cousin, and shuffle the cards, till our hand is a stronger one."

QUENTIN DURWARD.



O what country we are primarily indebted for the fascinating pieces of ornamental pasteboard which have served to pass away many a weary hour, is still a matter of considerable doubt and speculation. One authority seems to think they hailed originally from Egypt, but the Brahmins of India emphatically claim for their predecessors the invention of playing cards. Hindu cards being highly symbolical, were possibly employed at first for a kind of moral game: or else for divination, to supply a means whereby some clairvoyant mystic might raise a corner of the curtain which veils the mysterious decrees of fate. On them are inscribed the various incarnations of Vishnu, which strange to say closely resemble the devices on ancient Portuguese cards, and render it probable that the "diamond" of European packs had its origin in the sacred jewel worn on the breast, or held in the hand of the Eastern deity.

The Saracens are generally held responsible for the introduction of playing cards into Europe in the fourteenth century, and the game first played by them was called "Naib" (the four viceroys), a possible offspring of the highly complicated form of chess, "Chatur-raj" (the four kings). In Spain, naib speedily became corrupted into naipes, and to this word in combination with Jack or knave, may be traced the origin of our term of contempt, Jack-a-napes.

Once it had gained a footing, card-playing flourished apace, especially in Italy where all classes seemed to be in-

fected by an inordinate love of the pastime. Gambling was rife, and its ill-effects on social life so painfully apparent that the clergy raised their voices in protest and alarm at its prevalence. St. Bernadin preached a famous sermon of denunciation in the market place at Bologna, and so convincing was his eloquence that his hearers were induced to make a bonfire of their cards on the spot; only to regret this rash act, however, as soon as the blaze they had fed so eagerly had burnt itself out, and when fresh packs were procurable, the enthusiastic converts yielded to temptation, and gambled harder than ever.

Two or three hundred years later, when in England, the *beau monde* indulged immoderately in card-playing, the subject was again extremely popular with pulpit orators. Not always viewed with disfavour, for many worthy divines had a sneaking fancy for a good game of ombre, quadrille, or basset, but rather as affording apt illustrations and metaphors whereby to impress on their flocks certain rules for their guidance. One parson chose as his text the third verse of the twelfth chapter of Romans:—"As God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith"—and admonished his congregation to: "follow suit, play above board, improve the gifts dealt out to them, take care of their trumps, and play promptly when it became their turn."

At one time there existed a very prevalent and erroneous belief, that playing-cards were invented in France in 1392 for the entertainment of Charles VI. More correctly speaking, they were imported into that country at the end of the fourteenth century, and a

pack specially illuminated for the insane monarch by Gringonneur, a Parisian painter. The popular fallacy was cleverly utilised by an Edinburgh physician in court to support a case of alleged insanity. Under cross-examination he had been compelled to admit that the individual whose mental condition was the point at issue, played whist admirably. "And do you mean to say, Doctor," exclaimed the counsel for the defence, "that a person having a superior capacity for a game so difficult, and which requires in a pre-eminent degree, memory, judgment, and combination, can at the same time be deranged in his understanding?" "I am no card-player," replied the physician, "but I have read in history that cards were invented for the amusement of an insane king."

As early as 1418 the manufacture of playing-cards was a recognised trade in Germany, and the devices, hearts, bells, acorns, and leaves, which served to distinguish the four suits from each other, were both quaint and pretty. The pips of a French pack of the same period were emblematic of the four classes into which society was divided. Hearts, typical of the gens de c(h)oeur, or ecclesiastics; spades (the lance-point) of the military; diamonds, of the money-making citizens, merchants, or tradesmen; and clubs of the peasants. Sometimes David, Alexander, Cæsar, and Charlemagne were the chosen kings, and again Solomon. Augustus, Clovis, and Constantine, until the Spirit of the Revolution dethroned even these pasteboard monarchs in favour of a quartette of distinguished French philosophers.

The first playing-cards used in this country were imported from Italy, and ornamented with cups, swords, money, and clubs. These in 1660, were superseded by packs of home manufacture, their designs copied from the French; except the picture cards which were quite novel in style, and represented the armorial bearings of the four great European powers—the Pope, and the Kings of Spain, France, and England. Long before this, the idea that playing-cards might be utilised as an excellent *via media* to education, seems to have

suggested itself to various individuals. Packs were designed by means of which might be instilled into the inquiring mind the principles of rhetoric, heraldry, history, geography, astronomy, and much more beside.

A contributor to *Notes and Queries* gives a description of some cards in his possession each of which illustrates a well-known proverb. "Two of a trade can never agree" is inscribed beneath a representation of two fishwives engaged in a stand-up fight, their baskets of flounders cast aside unheeded, whilst a man is running off in the distance, laden with some of the contents.

During the political and religious troubles of 1678-79, when James and his ministers lived in constant dread of Popish plots, an enterprising publisher brought out a set of copper-plate prints for the edification and amusement of his Protestant customers. No doubt he anticipated a speedy disappearance of his stock, since a reluctant purchaser would certainly be open to suspicion of favouring the Papists, if not of actual participation in their fell designs. A most valuable pack of this description is preserved at the British Museum, which





gives a pictorial representation of the murder of Sir Edmund Godfrey.

This was not by any means the only occasion that playing-cards were employed for the purpose of caricature, political or social. The South Sea Bubble and other schemes of a fraudulent nature were most appropriately depicted upon them. Indeed, the number and diversity of the uses to which they have been put at some time or other would fill a list of considerable dimensions. In them we find the original of the visiting cards and kind-inquiry cards of modern social life. Short notes, love-letters, military commands, and business circulars were frequently indited on the back of an ace or ten which seemed specially *a propos* of the communication. An apt response was made by a clergyman to a lady from whom he had received a letter, presumably of a tender nature, written on the ten of hearts. His reply ran as follows:—

Your compliments, dear lady, pray forbear,
Old English services are more sincere,
You send ten hearts, the tithe is only mine,
Give me but one and keep the other nine.

In the fourth scene of the "Marriage à la Mode," Hogarth has immortalised

the invitation cards issued by the smart set of his time. They are strewn carelessly on the floor of the Countess's boudoir, and have been brought for her to see by her dear friend Lady Charlotte Squander, to whom they are addressed. On one her ladyship's company is requested at "Lady Heathen's drum-major, next Sunday," on another, at "Miss Hairbrain's rout;" whilst on a third, the orthography of which leaves much to be desired, "Count Basset begs to no how lade Squander sleapt last night."

A valuable relic for a collector of curios was discovered behind the marble chimney-piece of an old house in Dean Street, Soho. Together with several other visiting cards of a like description, was found a playing-card bearing on the reverse side the illustrious name of Isaac Newton.

In the reign of Queen Mary, divers Protestant subjects of Her Most Catholic Majesty in Ireland, were saved from persecution and possible martyrdom by the substitution of a pack of cards in place of a Royal Commission. The agent to whose care the official document had been entrusted, stayed a night *en route* at Chester, and indiscreetly informed the innkeeper's wife of the



object of his journey. This woman, Mrs. Edmonds, had a relative in Dublin for whose safety her fears were immediately aroused, and she determined to possess herself of the Royal Warrant. Next morning the agent proceeded on his way, quite unsuspecting the fraud which his late hostess had practised upon him, and in due course he made his bow before the Privy Council and presented his credentials in the case made to contain them, when, to his amazement and discomfiture, out fell a pack of cards. The Lord Lieutenant, seeing his horrified surprise, and possibly relieved at not being obliged to carry out a troublesome and dangerous duty, good-naturedly remarked:—"Let us have another commission, and in the meanwhile we can shuffle the cards." The transgression of one age is frequently considered a virtue in the next, and so it chanced in the case of the innkeeper's wife. Before a second commission could be obtained Queen Mary had been translated to another sphere; and her successor, Elizabeth, rewarded Mrs. Edmonds for her quickwittedness and deftness with a pension of £40 a year.

On another occasion, a pack of cards was instrumental in saving many lives, though in a totally different way. The Captain of a schooner endeavouring to make headway towards New York in the teeth of a westerly gale, found himself quite unable to contend against wind and weather owing to the inadequate numbers of his crew. On board were many sturdy land-lubbers, willing to help, but how to teach them the names and positions of the ropes seemed at first a problem too difficult for solution. At length he hit upon the ingenious plan of naming the different parts of the ship after the colours and suits of a pack, and of placing a picture card on each rope as a distinguishing mark. Hey Presto! the scheme worked like magic! No longer confused by mysterious nautical terms, each man knew his post, and the hawser, designated as the "king" or "Jack" of "spades" or "hearts," as the case might be, was seized with alacrity: and the 'cute Yankee skipper enabled to bring his vessel safely into port.

That playing-cards were used as early as the fifteenth century in Europe for the purpose of divination has been ascertained through the medium of an old painting, preserved in the Museum at Nantes. This picture represents Philippe-le-Bon, Archduke of Austria, accompanied by several members of his suite, consulting a soothsayer, who is seated beside a table on which the cards have evidently been dealt. With the exception of the four of diamonds, all are now gathered together under her left hand! and in her right she holds a wand, the other end of which is grasped by her royal visitor, who stands beside her.

Since then, and probably before, the cards have found many exponents of the mystic combinations which they form, when from them is sought some foreknowledge of the windings in the path of destiny, of whose course we most of us would fain know something, whilst we "dre the weird which is our ain." Perhaps the most successful of cartomanciennes was the celebrated Frenchwoman, Victorine Lenormand, whose predictions of the brilliant career and subsequent misfortunes of the Empress Josephine have rendered her name historically famous. This remarkable person originally started in life as a milliner's apprentice, and commenced practice as a fortune-teller at the close of the reign of Louis XVI. She established herself in Paris, at what she was pleased to style her "bureau d'écriture," No. 5, Rue de Tournay; and many and diverse were the visitors who flocked thither to consult her. Her appearance seems hardly to have been in accord with her mysterious gifts. It is difficult to imagine a "short fat little woman" such as she is described, "with a ruddy face overshadowed by the abundant curls of a flaxen wig," as endowed with occult power. Nathless for forty years she pursued her calling, and though some inquirers, doubting her skill, came disguised and scoffing at her prophecies, events proved the sybil right, and her reputation grew apace. The Princesse de Lamballe, Mirabeau, General Hoche, Lefebvre, Marat, Robespierre, St. Just, Barras and Barrère, were but a few of

the many celebrated persons who crossed her threshold to learn from her lips the destiny (too often tragic) Fate held in store for them. Nor did she herself escape unscathed in those times of universal peril. Imprisoned for a while during the Reign of Terror, the prophetess was again arrested under the Empire for her premature revelations to Josephine of the divorce proceedings then pending. Sent for by the Minister of Police, and informed that she would be under lock and key for some time to come, Mdlle. Lenormand proceeded to deal out and read the cards without any embarrassment. She then apprised Fouché of the fact, to be subsequently verified, that her release would soon be effected by the Duc de Rovigo, his successor in office.

Of individual playing-cards, the only two historically famous are the nine of diamonds, often yclept "the curse of Scotland," and the six of hearts, still remembered in the Emerald Isle as "Grace's card!" When William of Orange invaded Ireland, he made overtures to the Governor of Athlone, an appointment held by Col. the Hon. Richard Grace under James II. On receipt of these proposals the gallant old Cavalier handed the following reply, written on the back of the six of hearts, to the emissary of the usurper:—"Tell your master, I despise his offer, and that honour and conscience are dearer to a

gentleman than all the wealth and titles a prince can bestow."

As many as six theories have been advanced to account for the opprobrious term which still clings to the apparently inoffensive nine of diamonds; such as a certain similarity between it and the arms of Colonel Packer, who stood beside Charles I. on the scaffold, and whose shield was emblazoned with nine diamonds or lozenges. Again, it has been suggested that being "Pope" in the game of Pope Joan, the nine was thus christened by the Scotch Presbyterians, who certainly held the Pontiff in the light of a curse. Most popular is the belief that it was on this card that the Duke of Cumberland wrote his inhuman orders after Culloden; but that the title was due to this fact (if fact it be) has been disproved by a caricature of earlier date. It is now supposed that the curious name originated in the likeness to the armorial bearings of Earl Stair. This nobleman rendered himself infamous in the eyes of all Scotchmen, not only for his activity in promoting the union of the two kingdoms, but more especially for his responsibility in the Massacre of Glencoe. It is quite probable that the horror with which he was regarded for his merciless butchery of the MacDonalds might even be extended to the harmless playing-card which chanced to bear so marked a resemblance to his escutcheon.



ASTRONOMICAL PLAYING CARDS



WRITTEN BY H. F. CAMPBELL. ILLUSTRATED BY SPENCER BLYTH

"**M**AY I describe you as an intellectual sensualist, Smith?" said the one man who represented the minority in the argument; proceeding, "No offence, you know."

"Come, come, Dundas, I think that's rather strong, I must say—even if you are getting the worst of the argument," fussily puffed the little city capitalist, who owned the well-spread supper table at which the party were seated.

"But, my dear Cohen, I like any compliments I'm paid not to be too obvious," objected Smith.

"Dundas wraps his up with a subtlety that appeals very strongly to my sense of vanity."

"Also," continued Dundas, "I deny I'm getting the worst of the argument. You apply the cloture periodically, and all vote me down, but that is mere brute force, like the crime you're all supporting."

"Oh, settle it between yourselves, I'm sorry I spoke," said Cohen; "but it's difficult not to speak when Dundas, in his rabid defence of vegetarianism, calls eating meat a *crime*."

Dundas looked round the table with his piercing black eyes, but read no support in any one's face. Then he

answered, "Of course it's a crime, and none the less so that it's the general law of this world that we use our intellects to pervert. Self-preservation dictates that we should destroy many animals that are harmful to us; but we create life to take it away again by artificially breeding animals for the sole purpose of destroying them afterwards."

"How about our carnivorous teeth?" said Smith, laconically.

"How about any objectionable atavistic trait, moral or bodily?" replied Dundas. "Self-restraint, of course, would rid us of it by evolution. Also, may I point out that our canine teeth were primarily intended for battle, when we were giant apes."

"Well, it's easy to prophesy that your branch of the Dundas family will eventually become giant rabbits on the food that you've mapped out for them. *You* call it evolution; I call it devolution. Animals were given us to eat, and I shall eat them. Moreover, I don't intend to go in for a double stomach to please anybody. Meals take up enough of my time as it is, without having all the work to do over again."

"Who *gave* us animals to eat? I suppose you'd say God did, if you believed in Him."

"But wait a minute," interrupted

Smith; "I do believe in Him. But don't quote me the Old Testament. I don't believe in that ill-tempered old Arab sheikh Jahvey. I said God; don't misunderstand me. Although I am a meat-eater, I don't crave for the blood of innocent goats to satisfy my fits of spleen. With me it is merely appetite."

"Well, that simplifies my argument. The higher conception you have of the Deity the better. What do you suppose we are given intellects for, but to correct the empire of cruelty that is rampant in this world?—instead of which many of us seem to think the intellect is made to pander to the basest instincts of the senses. We have no right to any pleasure that is derived from a fellow-creature's pain."

"But there's no pain to speak of! Death is instantaneous."

"No pain! Do you know what a hell a cattle ship is on the Atlantic, when the beasts are rolled about goring each other, slipping, falling, breaking their limbs—the dying with the dead? Happy are the dead. They, at least, are spared the final butchery."

"But *that* is over immediately."

"Yes, if the butcher makes a good shot with the pole-axe; but you forget the mental agony before that, in the shambles."

"Nonsense! emotional nonsense!" ejaculated Smith, almost rudely.

"Is it? Will you try?"

"What are you driving at?"

"Did you ever hear of the man who was hypnotised, and had his mind transferred into that of a criminal who was about to be guillotined. No? Well, I have some little skill in hypnotism, as you know. I will transfer your mind to that of a certain animal I know of. I wanted to try the experiment, and as, at last, I've found a man who *knows* there is no pain, it is an opportunity not to be lost. Come now, I challenge you. Accept, or eat your words. I appeal to you all. Is it fair?"

"Yes, certainly," they all chorussed, much interested—though, had they been the chief person concerned, they would not have seen matters in quite the same light.

Smith rather recoiled.

"Well," he began, haltingly, "I think it rather a morbid experiment."

"Oh, then, you retract what you said?"

"Most emphatically not. I adhere to it. There is no pain."

"You'd better let me try the experiment then. I don't know that I shall succeed. Don't be afraid."

"Yes, do—most interesting—quite an idea," chorussed the others.

"I'm not afraid—only rather disgusted," replied Smith. All the same he would have liked to get out of it, but was carried away by the situation, and reluctantly agreed at last. It is doubtful whether he would have done so, if he had not privately believed Dundas would fail in the attempt.

"That's right," said Dundas rather unkindly, "I hope you are right—for your sake. However, don't be alarmed, you'll come back after your death, I'll see to that. You will find it quite an adventure. Sure you wouldn't like the trip across the Atlantic as well?"

Smith shook his head, and forced a laugh.

"Very well, then. I'll come round to your rooms to-morrow morning. You are to be slaughtered in the afternoon. Come round about five, you fellows. He will just about be coming out of it then. But I'd better have a witness from the beginning—Cohen, can you come?"

"Yes," said Cohen, "I'd throw up anything to see it."

"All right. Good-night, then. Take plenty of rest to-night, Smith. It is not every day one has the opportunity of being poleaxed; so you'd better come fresh to it."

* * * * *

Next day, Smith would have given a good deal to go back on his word; but his pride forbade this, and he still buoyed himself up with the conviction that Dundas would utterly fail.

"Now," said Dundas, when he had arrived with Cohen, "are you ready? You are. Very well, I'll just explain a little to you, before I start. You will lose your personality and your mind. You will not be able to think more than

the ox, or feel more than the ox. To all intents and purposes, you will *be* the ox. I give you one last chance; do you take back everything you said last night?"

"No," replied Smith, firmly.

"Then we'll start." He commenced mesmeric passés, and in a short time succeeded. He rarely failed; his hypnotic power was not given to more than one man in a generation. It was a force.

"What does he mean?" asked Cohen.

"He is being driven with other creatures—to the shambles. Let us hope a painless death awaits him," answered Dundas grimly.

* * * *

Smith had recovered consciousness—if losing one's identity and having it transferred bodily into some one else's



"I—AM—ON—A—COUNTRY—ROAD—WALKING—WALKING—WITH—OTHERS."

Ascertaining first that Smith was entirely under the influence, by pulling back the eyelids, he proceeded to suggest his wishes with all his strength.

"Where are you? Answer!" he asked in a few minutes.

Presently Smith's voice came, as if from an immense distance, with a sleepy touch in it. "I—am—on—a—country—road—walking—walking—with—others." He stopped.

"That will do," said Dundas.

can be so termed. The first conscious feeling he had was that of a marvellous sense of smell. It entirely dominated his other senses. True, he could see fairly well, but it was only an adjunct; it was not his chief sense. Everything he saw looked rather dream-like. He felt hungry, and though he smelt hay all round him, and sometimes paused to see where it was, some one behind drove him with blows. The hard road hurt his feet. Presently another animal

EAT LESS MEAT

HOME
MADE
HEALTH

THE
EASY
FOOD



Quaker Oats

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came down the road, in an opposite direction, dragging something behind it which frightened him. It rotated, and had a grating noise. His comrades were frightened, too, and they all turned to flee, but the man behind beat them, and drove them on. The thing did not hurt them, after all, but passed on. Then he came to some food beside the road and stopped to eat, but he only got a mouthful—he was driven on. Not long afterwards they came to a large village, and though there were several alarming things he could not understand, they had safely got half-way through it when the man behind ceased driving them on. He did not like the look of the house they had stopped at. Skinned dead bodies, hacked in pieces, hung on hooks outside. The man opened two large folding doors, and began driving them in. *Faugh!* how the place reeked of fresh-shed blood! They all recoiled.

More men came, and they were fiercely beaten from behind. They ran hither and thither in their anguish; they would go anywhere rather than into this bloody trap. Their agony was none the less for being dumb. At last the others lost their heads, and blundered into the very place they would avoid, but he made a desperate dash, not for liberty, but life—only dear life. The murderers and their abettors scattered like chaff from before him. He was irresistible. Dashing madly up a side road, the hue and cry gradually died away behind. He had come to a little hill, and began cropping the sweet grass, though he still trembled with his late experiences. But he was not to be left in peace for long; the murderers came running round a corner, and tried to get round him—he could smell the blood on their clothes. He made another desperate dash up the hill, breaking through a hedge at the top into a field, where he stood at bay, with distended eyes and dilated nostrils. He was safe at last, he hoped. He began pretending to eat, but was uneasy, lifting his head often, to watch the heads of the butchers, who were posted round the field. Presently the gate was opened, and he saw a small herd of cows. He pricked up his ears, and

walked towards them; the solitude he was so unused to, surrounded by enemies, had tortured him. Soon he joined the herd, and walked downhill with them. Now, surely, the bitterness of death was overpassed.

They were doubtless going to some pleasant lush-meadow, where all would be restful peace, as before. Down the road they went, into the village again, past the dreadful spot—no—suddenly there was a rush from behind, blows rained on him—he tried to turn, was headed back, turned again, stumbled—more fierce blows—a mist floated before his eyes—he ran forward a few paces to escape from his persecutors—there was a clang as the heavy gate swung behind, and he was trapped. His doom had overtaken him; he knew further struggles were useless, and he went into a little stable shed without further resistance; but his mind suffered a dumb agony. He sniffed in the dreadful smell of death at every breath.

There was a pause, but the men were not idle. He could see nothing; but, presently, there was a stamping and scuffling outside. Then he heard a rush into the slaughter-house next door, from which only a thin board divided him. It was one of his comrades of the morning. Presently there was a dull thud, and something heavy fell. A charnel-house smell soon crept through the chinks.

In about half-an-hour's time, or perhaps more, the upper half of the door was thrown open, and a man leant over, and passed a noose over his horns, then the lower half opened, the man retired, and he walked out, suspicious as to what would happen next.

Only one man's head was visible, right away on the opposite side of the yard. There were two doors open, the one from which he had just come out, and another, next to it, from which a dreadful smell issued. On one side of the yard was a five-barred gate, leading into a paddock at the back. When he got into the middle of the yard, he felt a steady pull on his head. He yielded to it at first, and the rope pulled him inch by inch towards the death-door. The rope had been passed through a hole in the wall of the slaughter-house,

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"(Signed) THOMAS BYTHEWAY.
"37, The Green, Stratford, 11th February, 1899."

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and five men were pulling on at the other side. Realising the peril, he made one bound towards the gate, and the rope instantly slackened, the five men having momentarily been jerked off their legs. Into the gate he charged madly; but it withstood him, and then he tried desperately to scale it—death was very close behind, and gaining. He managed to get the forepart of his body over—then one foot caught for a moment, and he was lost. The men had meanwhile got up and pulled again. Steadily, surely, step by step, in blind terror, in unvoiced agony, death grew nearer. One more despairing effort was this time foiled, and a miscalculated rush brought him to the threshold. Now he was through the door. In a trice his head was pinned against the wall, before he knew what to struggle against. Almost immediately a crashing blow was delivered by the waiting butcher. Mercy!

The man had failed to hit fair, possibly from excitement, though it is not a rare occurrence.

The axe was wrenched out of the hand

bone. He waited dumbly for death, in fear and pain. Another. Mercy!

Would death *never come?* Again the pole-axe was wrenched free, and this time fell true, bearing with it merciful oblivion. It is not *always* so expeditious.

* * * *

Smith sat up and rubbed his eyes. There were four or five of the men he had met last night seated round, looking curiously at him.

"Well," said Dundas, "how did you enjoy yourself? Relate your little experiences. Is it *very* painless, or only rather so?" He looked intently at Smith, who was very white and shaky.

"So far from relating my experiences, I shall try never to *think* of them—not wishing to go mad," replied Smith. "As to you, Dundas, I almost believe you are the devil. You would have been burnt as a wizard in the middle ages."

"Console yourself—I'm not the devil; but I've just shown you we have not *quite* improved him off the earth yet, and, until we develop a higher moral sense, we never shall!"



"IS IT VERY PAINLESS, OR ONLY RATHER SO?"